

message to the American working family that we are on their side.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MACK). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, may I inquire, what business is the Senate in at this moment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business, 90 minutes controlled by the minority leader.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, then I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to continue as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY ACT OF 1996

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, for all the right reasons our Nation has been a generator of radioactive material for nearly five decades. Most of this material is a byproduct of two principal activities: national defense activities and commercial nuclear powerplants, which generate more than 20 percent of America's electricity.

These two major activities have worked to benefit all Americans. Therefore, I believe managing these radioactive wastes is a national concern and responsibility. We cannot and must not walk away from this responsibility. To not address this responsibility would be unwise, irresponsible, and unsafe.

With specific regard to electrical generation, every American benefits from the richness and diversity of our country's natural resources and their use. Through interconnecting transmission lines that traverse the land, we have one of the world's most reliable and powerful electricity supplies that drives our economy.

Nuclear powerplants are at work in more than 30 States in every region of the country. Supplying more than 20 percent of the Nation's electricity, nuclear energy is part of the foundation for our Nation's high standard of living and economic growth.

For this reason, there is broad consensus and support for ensuring that the Federal Government meet its responsibility to provide a central storage facility for used nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive material from the defense program. Senate bill 1271 allows and directs our Federal Government to meet that responsibility.

As I know many of my colleagues have discovered in meetings, phone calls, and in their mailrooms, support for S. 1271 is coming from all quarters, including State and local government officials, public utility commissioners,

newspaper editorial boards, labor unions, chambers of commerce, national trade associations, and electric utilities, just to name a few groups. I am very pleased to have the bipartisan support of 28 cosponsors for my legislation.

Lawsuits have been filed by 18 States against the Federal Government over inaction of the Government to follow their statutory direction to manage radioactive material. This clearly demonstrates the importance and urgency of fulfilling the Federal Government's obligation to accept spent fuel. That obligation has been directed in law since the 1982 Nuclear Waste Act, and it is reaffirmed by my legislation.

Since the late 1950's, scientists have been studying, testing, and successfully employing storage technologies. And since the early 1970's, the Nevada test site was singled out as one of the nine leading sites to consider for a radioactive waste repository. Hasty decisions are not being made here. S. 1271 is directing action be taken as a result of the science and technology and testing.

Electric customers have committed nearly \$12 billion solely to study, test, and build a radioactive waste management system. Already more than \$4.6 billion has been spent, much of it to assure public safety. Now is the time to act on the Nevada site.

Broad-based national support for the nuclear material waste management program and S. 1271 is based on the fact that this issue is clearly a national concern requiring a national solution. Furthermore, support is buttressed by the positive work that is ongoing at the Nevada test site, which is an isolated, unpopulated, dry desert location that has a long history of uses for some of the most extreme research known to man.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join with the many State and local officials, labor leaders, business leaders, and scientists throughout the country in support of S. 1271. Allow our citizens the comfort of knowing our Government has acted responsible to assure safe, environmentally sound long-term storage and disposal of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive material.

Mr. President, with that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE GASOLINE TAX

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I am somewhat at a loss because I have been in the Finance Committee this morning and also have been serving in another capacity for the last few minutes, so I have not heard any of the actual statements on the floor of the U.S.

Senate that have been made this morning. However, it has been brought to my attention that several statements have been made relative to the gasoline tax and the proposal to repeal 4.3-cent-per-gallon of the gasoline tax.

Considering that those statements have been made this morning and having a general idea of probably what those statements were, I would like to not only stand for a moment to respond but also to place in the RECORD some pertinent facts that I think need to be made very clear.

First, in the Finance Committee meeting this morning, which I must say was very spirited, very lively, we had a lot of discussion about whether or not we should repeal the 4.3-cent-per-gallon gas tax enacted in 1993 toward deficit reduction. We had a distinguished panel that represented the truckers, that represented the bus industry, that represented the airline industry. They had a wonderful man there who operates, in Prince Georges County, two service stations. The basic theory was, if we could get the Congress to repeal the 4.3-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax, that immediately 4.3 cents per gallon would be taken off of gasoline at the pump.

Let us look back a little bit to see if this logic will come true. After 1993, the 4.3-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax was collected, after we placed the tax on and allocated this particular new tax, this new fee toward deficit reduction, not only did we start decreasing the deficit, but we did something else. Gasoline prices came down. Gasoline prices came down after we placed the 4.3-cent user fee, in 1993, on gasoline. People do not talk about that very much right now, but that was the case.

There is another concern that I had this morning in today's hearing in the Finance Committee. The people on the panel, who are very good advocates for their constituent groups, for the truckers and the airlines, the service station owners, and all the rest, these individuals came before the Senate Committee on Finance this morning and basically stated that, first, "If you will repeal this gasoline tax, we're going to be able to spur the economy, we're going to be able to lower gasoline prices, we're going to be able to buy diesel for our trucks at 4.3 cents per gallon less."

But what was never stated, even though they were coming and saying, "Give us a break, give us some relief," they never stated—any of them—how we were going to make up this loss of revenue. We collect \$4.8 billion a year in this particular tax of 4.3 cents per gallon. Not one of our witnesses this morning said, "We have a way for you to prevent the deficit from rising dramatically if you repeal this gasoline tax." Not one of them. Not one witness this morning gave us an indication of how we are going to make up this shortfall.

I guess they were saying, "Cut this tax out, let the deficit increase," because they gave us no responsible alternative for making up the difference.

There is something else that concerned me, Mr. President, about that particular hearing. It was very, very partisan. It was extremely political. In fact, I commented that I did not know yet that the nominating conventions had started. I thought those were going to be in California and in Chicago come August, but it sounded like it was a political convention this morning in the Finance Committee. I am sorry it happened that way, but it did happen. You just have to take that on and take that as it is.

But what was not said also by any of our panelists, nor Members on the other side of the aisle, I might say, is that some people's philosophy is that you should not ask the Government to solve all of the problems; that every time there is a problem, you do not seek Government intervention.

But this is what, on the other side of the aisle, we are being asked to do at this time in response to rising gas prices. By the way, there are some Senators on our side of the aisle who support the repeal of the gasoline tax. Senator BAUCUS from Montana, for example, had a letter there and it stated his intent to vote for the repeal. I might vote for the repeal. I am not sure. I do not think I will. I might, if I can be shown where the consumers might benefit. But no one yet has shown us how the consumer is going to benefit to the tune of 4.3 cents a gallon if we repeal the gasoline tax.

Here is what they also did not indicate this morning. They are coming to the Government for relief. Why do they not go to the oil companies for relief? You say, "Wait a minute, how can they go and seek relief from the oil companies?" Here is how.

Let us look at the profits of, say, Shell, Amoco, Chevron, Texaco. In the first quarter of 1996, Shell reported \$483 million in profits compared to \$340 million in the first quarter of 1995. Amoco, \$728 million in the first quarter this year compared to \$523 million in the first quarter of 1995. Chevron, \$616 million in the first quarter of 1996 compared to \$459 million in the first quarter of 1995. Texaco, \$386 million in the first quarter of 1996 compared to \$297 million in profits in the first quarter of 1995.

That is an increase, for example, of \$143 million that Shell gained over the first quarter of last year. That is a situation where Amoco looks up here and all of a sudden the first quarter of this year, they have made \$205 million more in net profits than they made in the first quarter of 1995—\$205 million.

That is where some relief can be given, because that is where the price at the pump is determined, not with the 4.3-cent-a-gallon deficit reduction tax. The price at the pump, as the distinguished Presiding Officer knows, is established by the oil companies as to what they charge the retailer at the service station. That is where the price is decided.

The gasoline company, the Texacos and Chevrons remit that tax to the

Government, not the retailer, not the Chevron dealer who was there from Prince George's County this morning. The retailers do not do that. The big oil companies collect and remit the tax, and I assume they charge a fee on top of the tax for collection and remission of the tax to the Federal Government.

This is the same tax that has increased our opportunity to deal with the deficit numbers. Had we not had them, we perhaps would have been \$30 billion more in debt.

Mr. President, I know that there are a lot of organizations in this town that will steam up here in the next few days and weeks to repeal the gas tax. But I might note that we also have the taxpayer bill of rights 2. On this side of the aisle, we have cleared the taxpayer bill of rights 2 to be passed. The second taxpayer bill of rights gives equity, uniformity, and fairness to the taxpayers of America on our side of the aisle, we say, "Let's go with it." On the other side of the aisle, "Let's slow it up, because we may want to put this repeal of the gasoline tax on the taxpayer bill of rights."

I hope they do not use that vehicle, because I think the taxpayers right now need to have that protection by the taxpayer bill of rights 2. It has been a bipartisan effort. The distinguished Presiding Officer, I think, has been a cosponsor of the taxpayer bill of rights. Let us not slow that down, and let us not speed up so quickly the stampeding to repeal the 4.3-cents-a-gallon gasoline tax unless we have the assurance, the absolute ironclad assurance that should we do it, the consumers are going to benefit and not the big oil companies.

Right now, it does not seem like the big oil companies have a great deal of sympathy for the consumer when they are making 42 percent more profit; 39 percent more profit; 34 percent more profit; 30 percent more profit—Shell, Amoco, Chevron, Texaco, and on down the line. They are all awash in money.

They say, "Well, the reason that those gasoline prices are having to be increased right now"—you have heard them, Mr. President, you have watched them on television and read them—the reason is because of all these environmental standards that we have to meet; we are just having to take all of these profits and plow back in to increasing the environmental standards, and that is increasing our costs. Increase their costs? They are making 42 percent more profit than they did this time last year, Mr. President, so that argument does not work.

They sound to me like the big pharmaceutical companies. They say, "Oh, we have to make this enormous profit"—the most profitable industry in America today—"so we can do research." We pay them for research with research and development tax credits, and yet they are trying to hornswoggle the public, take advantage of the consumers, gouge the elderly. They are

trying to charge the very highest prices, and they are getting by with it. They are getting by with it, Mr. President. They are charging the American consumer 40 and 50 percent more than that same drug is selling for across the border in Mexico and Canada and Great Britain, Europe—all over the world.

We subsidize them, we pay for it, and we pay for their product through the nose. It is not right, and before we rush to judgment on repealing this 4.3 cent user fee, I just urge us to step back a little bit and say, "Where are we going to make up the difference?" Why can the oil companies not use a little more sympathy, and if we repeal it, is this actually going to mean that the consumer is going to get a break? In my opinion, there is no evidence whatsoever, not one scintilla of evidence that the consumer is going to benefit from this particular break.

Mr. President, in the Wall Street Journal, I think this morning—and, by the way, we had no economists, we had only advocates for the particular constituencies there this morning—we said, "Where are all the economists? Why didn't they come? Why didn't we have someone to answer this question? Are the consumers going to get the benefit of this repeal if we do in fact repeal it, if we increase the deficit and repeal the gasoline tax?"

Here is front page of the Wall Street Journal of this morning, Mr. President. It says, "Don't Do It." I am going to quote:

Many economists say repealing the gasoline tax is wrong. Federal Chairman Greenspan and board nominee Rivlin have previously called for higher rates to discourage consumption and balance the budget.

By the way, Mr. President, I am not calling for higher rates. I am just saying that with the rates we have, we should not be stampeded into repealing them before we know what the results are going to be.

Berkeley Alan Auerbach calls the cut, "A silly idea."

Mr. President, that is the Wall Street Journal this morning. It is a very conservative epistle, all of us know.

Mr. President, the distinguished majority leader, who is certainly a member and former chairman of the Finance Committee, very distinguished Member of this body, Senator DOLE of Kansas—Senator DOLE was talking this morning, today, and on the floor some this week, about the need to repeal the gasoline tax.

You know, in 1982, only 1 day before Christmas Eve, December 23—we were in session around here that particular time, and I kind of remember that time. I will read from a "Dear Colleague" letter from Senator DOLE, at that time the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

I am now quoting Senator DOLE's "Dear Colleague" letter:

I urge you to vote for the [Surface Transportation Act of 1982]. . . . The bill increases the taxes on gasoline, diesel fuel and other motor fuels from 4 to 9 cents per gallon. [A]n

increase of 125 percent in the fuels taxes may look onerous . . . This will only amount to a 4 percent increase in gasoline prices and the new 9-cent tax will be significantly lower relative to other consumer prices than the 4-cent tax was when [that] was enacted in 1959.

It seems the newer environment or recent events have convinced Senator DOLE that maybe gasoline taxes all of a sudden are not good, because a few years back he was supporting the gasoline tax.

Mr. President, there is also another part of our discussion this morning—I am sure there has been on the floor—that historically the Congress, in enacting a gasoline tax, puts this into the highway trust fund. Historically that is the truth except for in 1990 and 1993. Historically that is what the tradition has been.

But, Mr. President, we found in 1993 a most unique situation. We found a deficit that had run wild that was out of control. We also found that we had a President who was willing to take a risk, a political risk. Mr. President, it was a political risk. Every Democrat on this side of the Senate Chamber voted for this particular package that included 4.3 cents.

That 4.3 cents did not go to the highway trust fund. No, sir, it did not. You are correct; it did not. But at that moment we had to do something, we had to do something drastic, and we had to do something dramatic. We had a very unique situation that we had to take care of. The way that we started attacking it, Mr. President, was saying, OK, this may not be traditional, this may be unique, this may be different, but we are going to have to do it. We enacted the 4.3-cent gasoline tax.

As a result, we have cut the deficit, Mr. President. As a result, in my opinion, the people go in to the service station and buy their gasoline, and if they think they are reducing the deficit with having to pay perhaps a little more, I think they are willing to do it. I may be wrong, but I think they are willing to do it.

Our President took that opportunity. He accepted that challenge. He met the

mandate of the people to do something about the national debt and the deficit. It was hard. I tell you it was a hard vote to cast over here. It was an easy vote over there because not one of our good colleagues on the other side—not one—voted for the package.

I can remember the hue and cry after that—"the biggest tax increase in American history," and all of that. I did not think it was. I think in retrospect the historians will look kindly upon those who took that risk and who accepted that challenge that we had to do something to protect and to begin to protect the future generations who are going to be called upon to pay this huge deficit, this huge national debt. The 1993 deficit reduction bill was a way to start.

To the best of my knowledge, the people out there—and I have not seen a poll on this, no sir—but to the best of my knowledge, the people have said, "If it goes for deficit reduction, if it will help defray this onerous debt that is going to be on the backs of our children and grandchildren, I am willing to pay a little more."

Let me also state once again, as I opened, Mr. President, that when we passed this 4.3-cent gasoline tax, the price of gasoline at the pump went down.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a chart and other tables which give that statement credibility and which backs it up with the facts be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TABLE 9.4.—MOTOR GASOLINE RETAIL PRICES, U.S. CITY AVERAGE
(Cents per gallon, including taxes)

	Leaded regular	Un-leaded regular	Un-leaded premium	All types ^a
1973 average	38.8	NA	NA	NA
1974 average	53.2	NA	NA	NA
1975 average	56.7	NA	NA	NA
1976 average	59.0	61.4	NA	NA
1977 average	62.2	65.6	NA	NA
1978 average	82.8	67.0	NA	65.2
1979 average	86.7	90.3	NA	88.2
1980 average	119.1	124.5	NA	122.1

TABLE 16.—RETAIL MOTOR GASOLINE AND ON-HIGHWAY DIESEL FUEL PRICES, 1995 TO PRESENT
(Cents per gallon, including taxes)

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1995												
Motor Gasoline	113.0	112.0	111.9	115.7	122.5	123.9	120.1	117.0	115.8	113.4	110.8	111.8
Conventional Areas	109.5	108.8	108.9	113.7	121.0	122.3	118.0	115.1	113.8	110.9	108.4	109.5
Oxygenated Areas	118.4	116.8	116.6	118.8	123.8	124.8	122.4	119.8	119.8	119.0	118.0	118.0
OPRG Areas	126.2	125.1	124.0	124.0	129.6	132.7	130.9	127.6	125.8	123.2	124.0	124.5
RFG Areas	121.8	120.7	119.3	120.9	126.8	128.4	125.3	121.0	118.5	118.2	115.2	115.8
Regular	108.2	107.3	107.2	111.1	117.8	119.1	115.4	112.3	111.1	108.7	106.2	107.1
Conventional Areas	105.1	104.4	104.8	109.4	116.5	117.8	113.5	110.7	109.3	106.5	104.0	105.1
Oxygenated Areas	114.4	112.9	112.9	115.0	120.2	121.0	118.8	116.0	116.1	115.2	114.2	114.1
OPRG Areas	117.6	116.4	115.3	115.3	121.3	124.3	123.3	119.3	117.8	115.2	115.4	115.9
RFG Areas	116.4	115.3	114.0	115.7	121.7	123.1	119.9	115.6	114.0	112.8	109.8	110.3
Midgrade	117.4	118.5	115.1	119.9	128.8	128.3	124.5	121.3	120.0	117.5	115.1	116.0
Conventional Areas	113.9	113.3	113.2	117.9	125.4	126.7	122.4	119.3	118.1	115.1	112.6	113.8
Oxygenated Areas	123.3	121.5	121.1	123.5	128.5	129.5	126.8	123.9	123.5	122.7	122.5	122.7
OPRG Areas	130.1	129.2	127.9	127.7	133.1	135.9	134.1	130.9	129.0	126.6	128.5	128.7
RFG Areas	126.4	125.2	124.0	125.4	131.2	133.1	130.3	126.3	124.7	123.0	119.9	120.6
Premium	127.5	126.5	125.8	129.5	136.4	137.9	134.2	131.1	129.8	127.3	124.7	125.5
Conventional Areas	123.4	122.6	122.2	127.0	134.5	138.1	131.8	126.8	127.5	124.4	122.0	122.9
Oxygenated Areas	134.0	132.3	131.9	133.8	138.5	139.4	137.4	135.3	134.5	134.2	133.5	133.6
OPRG Areas	139.4	138.1	137.1	137.0	142.4	145.1	143.2	139.9	138.1	135.3	138.3	138.8
RFG Areas	135.5	134.2	132.6	134.0	139.6	141.3	138.5	134.2	132.9	131.6	128.0	129.5
On-Highway Diesel fuel	109.8	108.8	108.8	110.4	112.5	111.9	110.0	110.5	111.9	111.5	112.0	113.0
1996												
Motor Gasoline	113.7	113.6	118.3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Conventional Areas	111.5	111.4	116.4	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Oxygenated Areas	119.0	119.1	123.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
OPRG Areas	127.3	126.9	128.0	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

TABLE 9.4.—MOTOR GASOLINE RETAIL PRICES, U.S. CITY AVERAGE—Continued
(Cents per gallon, including taxes)

	Leaded regular	Un-leaded regular	Un-leaded premium	All types ^a
1981 ^b average	131.1	137.6	147.0	135.2
1982 average	122.2	128.6	141.6	128.1
1983 average	115.7	124.1	138.2	122.5
1984 average	112.8	121.2	136.6	119.6
1985 average	111.6	120.2	134.0	119.6
1986 average	85.7	92.7	108.5	93.1
1987 average	69.7	94.8	108.3	95.7
1988 average	89.9	94.6	110.7	96.3
1989 average	98.8	102.1	119.7	106.0
1990 average	114.3	116.4	134.9	121.7
1991 average	NA	114.0	132.1	119.6
1992 average	NA	112.7	131.6	119.0
1993:				
January	NA	111.7	131.3	118.2
February	NA	110.8	130.1	117.2
March	NA	109.8	129.4	116.3
April	NA	111.2	130.4	117.5
May	NA	112.8	131.9	119.3
June	NA	113.0	132.1	119.4
July	NA	110.9	130.5	117.4
August	NA	109.7	129.4	118.3
September	NA	108.5	128.2	115.1
October	NA	112.7	132.3	119.3
November	NA	111.3	130.5	117.8
December	NA	107.0	126.8	113.6
Average	NA	110.8	130.2	117.3
1994:				
January	NA	104.3	124.0	110.9
February	NA	105.1	124.5	111.4
March	NA	104.5	124.3	110.9
April	NA	106.4	126.0	112.8
May	NA	108.0	127.4	114.3
June	NA	110.6	130.0	116.7
July	NA	113.6	132.7	119.9
August	NA	118.2	138.7	124.3
September	NA	117.7	138.4	123.7
October	NA	116.2	134.5	121.2
November	NA	116.3	135.4	122.2
December	NA	114.3	133.7	120.3
Average	NA	111.2	130.5	117.4
1995:				
January	NA	112.8	132.4	119.0
February	NA	112.0	131.6	118.1
March	NA	111.5	130.6	117.3
April	NA	114.0	132.5	119.7
May	NA	120.0	138.3	125.8
June	NA	122.6	141.1	128.1
July	NA	118.5	138.4	125.2
August	NA	116.4	135.2	122.2
September	NA	114.8	133.2	120.6
October	NA	112.7	131.5	118.5
November	NA	110.1	129.2	116.1
December	NA	110.1	129.0	116.0
Average	NA	114.7	133.6	120.5
1996 January	NA	112.9	131.7	118.6

^a Also includes types of motor gasoline not shown separately.

^b In September 1981, the Bureau of Labor Statistics changed the weights used in the calculation of average motor gasoline prices. From September 1981 forward, gasoline is included in the average for all types, and unleaded premium is weighted more heavily.

^c Based on September through December data only.

NA=Not available.

Notes: * See Note 5 at end of section. * Geographic coverage for 1973–1977 is 56 urban areas. Geographic coverage for 1978 forward is 85 urban areas.

Sources: * Monthly Data: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Prices: Energy. * Annual Data: 1973–Platt's Oil Price Handbook and Almanac, 1974, 51st Edition. 1974 forward—calculated by the Energy Information Administration as the simple averages of monthly data.

TABLE 16.—RETAIL MOTOR GASOLINE AND ON-HIGHWAY DIESEL FUEL PRICES, 1995 TO PRESENT—Continued
[Cents per gallon, including taxes]

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
RFG Areas	117.7	117.8	122.1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Regular	109.0	108.9	113.7	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Conventional Areas	107.2	107.0	112.0	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Oxygenated Areas	115.2	115.2	119.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
OPRG Areas	118.4	118.1	119.1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
RFG Areas	112.2	112.3	116.8	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Midgrade	117.9	117.9	122.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Conventional Areas	115.8	115.6	120.6	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Oxygenated Areas	123.4	123.8	128.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
OPRG Areas	131.3	131.5	132.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
RFG Areas	122.3	122.5	126.3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Premium	127.6	127.4	132.0	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Conventional Areas	125.1	124.8	129.8	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Oxygenated Areas	134.6	134.9	138.8	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
OPRG Areas	140.0	139.4	140.6	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
RFG Areas	130.5	130.7	134.7	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
On-Highway Diesel Fuel	114.5	114.5	118.3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1996	2/5	2/12	2/19	2/26	3/4	3/11	3/18	3/25	4/1	4/8	4/15	4/22
Motor Gasoline	113.0	112.8	113.3	115.3	117.0	117.1	118.1	121.0	122.3	124.8	128.7	130.1
Conventional Areas	110.7	110.4	111.0	113.4	115.1	115.0	116.2	119.2	120.5	122.8	126.9	127.4
Oxygenated Areas	118.7	117.8	120.1	119.9	122.3	122.6	122.9	128.1	127.0	131.4	133.2	136.8
OPRG Areas	127.3	127.0	126.7	126.7	127.5	127.7	127.7	129.1	130.9	132.2	136.0	138.0
RFG Areas	117.4	117.1	117.4	119.2	120.7	121.3	122.0	124.3	126.0	128.7	133.1	137.0
Regular	108.3	108.0	108.7	110.7	112.4	112.5	113.5	116.4	117.8	120.4	124.2	125.6
Conventional Areas	106.3	106.1	106.6	109.0	110.7	110.5	111.9	114.9	116.2	118.5	122.5	123.0
Oxygenated Areas	114.9	113.9	116.0	116.0	116.1	118.6	118.8	122.2	123.2	127.5	129.3	132.8
OPRG Areas	118.4	118.1	117.9	117.8	118.6	118.8	118.8	120.2	122.2	123.7	127.6	129.9
RFG Areas	111.9	111.5	112.0	113.8	115.4	116.1	116.8	119.0	120.8	123.6	128.0	132.3
Midgrade	117.2	116.9	117.7	119.7	121.3	121.3	122.2	125.0	125.3	128.9	132.9	134.1
Conventional Areas	114.9	114.6	115.4	117.7	119.3	119.3	120.4	123.2	124.5	126.9	131.0	131.6
Oxygenated Areas	123.2	122.0	125.0	124.9	128.2	127.3	127.4	131.1	131.6	136.4	138.0	141.5
OPRG Areas	131.8	131.6	131.4	131.3	132.1	132.1	132.1	133.8	135.2	136.6	140.1	141.9
RFG Areas	122.2	121.8	122.1	123.8	125.1	125.3	126.2	128.6	130.1	132.7	137.2	140.3
Premium	126.9	125.5	127.1	129.1	130.8	130.8	131.7	134.5	135.7	138.1	142.2	143.8
Conventional Areas	124.2	123.8	124.4	126.8	128.6	128.4	129.6	132.5	133.7	136.0	140.2	140.9
Oxygenated Areas	134.4	133.8	136.0	135.4	138.0	137.9	138.2	141.1	141.6	146.4	148.6	152.4
OPRG Areas	139.8	139.5	139.0	139.3	140.8	140.3	140.2	141.7	143.2	144.2	147.9	149.5
RFG Areas	130.4	130.1	130.2	132.1	133.3	133.8	134.6	137.0	138.4	140.8	145.3	148.9
On-Highway Diesel fuel	113.0	113.4	115.1	116.4	117.5	117.3	117.2	121.0	122.2	124.9	130.5	130.4

NA—Not available.

Note: See Glossary for definitions of abbreviations. See Technical Note 1, page 40, for more information about the data in this table.

Sources: See page 34. Weekly Petroleum Status Report/Energy Information Administration.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I am going to sit down in just a moment. I know my good friend from North Dakota, Senator DORGAN, is now on the floor. But you are going to hear an awful lot now because it is 1996—it is an even-numbered year—it is getting ready to be the last election of this century, and it is going to be a hum-dinger. It is going to be the one that we are going to tell our grandchildren and great-grandchildren about, because it is going to get pretty exciting.

We are going to hear an awful lot about the 1993 economic plan, that it was the biggest tax increase in history, will ruin the country, whatever. I think we might start now setting that record straight. Look at the Wall Street Journal, October 26, 1994. I quote the Wall Street Journal:

Contrary to Republican claims, the 1993 package is not the largest tax increase in history. The 1982 deficit-reduction package of President Reagan and Senator Robert Dole in a GOP controlled Senate was a bigger tax bill, both in 1993 adjusted dollars and as a percentage of the overall economy.

The Wall Street Journal, not exactly a left-wing, Democratic newspaper, Mr. President.

Let us look at the Washington Post, February 1, 1995, recently and I quote:

The biggest tax increase in history did not occur in the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1993. The biggest increase in post-World War II history occurred in 1982, under President Ronald Reagan.

Mr. President, part of Senator DOLE's historic tax increase was in fact a 5-cent gasoline tax.

Let us look at November 3, 1995, Mr. President, not long ago.

It is not true that the \$240 billion tax increase approved by Congress in 1993, at Mr. Clinton's behest, is the largest in American history. When adjusted for inflation—the only way to make comparisons of dollar amounts from different years—a tax increase endorsed by Mr. Dole, in 1982, when he was chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, was larger.

So, Mr. President, as we hear a lot of these statements made on this floor of this great institution, in the U.S. Senate, over the next several months up until the election, I think from time to time it behooves us well to come to this floor and to respond and set the facts out and set the record straight.

That is the purpose of my visit here this morning. I think as we go forward in the next several weeks, as this debate intensifies, it will be our obligation to come forward and spread the facts as to what the real story is on the record.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are.

THE GAS TAX

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I will add a few comments to the comments offered by Senator PRYOR from Arkansas and the comments offered by Senator DASCHLE, the minority leader. We have this morning seen a work crew of seven U.S. Senators trudge to the floor of the Senate and dutifully describe that all ills in America, present, past and future should be laid at the door-

step of the current President of the United States, President Clinton.

I listened to see if I could find the ultimate charge, maybe that would be that the President is responsible for the Andromeda Galaxy that is racing at 4,500 miles an hour toward the Milky Way, of course, which is where we live. A galaxy three times the size of ours is racing at us 4,500 miles an hour, and most estimate, I think there is no disagreement, that when it hits us it will destroy our galaxy and us in about 4 to 5 billion years. Perish the thought. But if there is a Senate at some point in the future, someone will come and probably try to lay that at the footsteps of the current incumbent President. They did not quite get that far this morning, but close, close enough.

The proposal this morning was we should cut the 4.3-cent gas tax. That may get done. I am not crazy about the gas tax because I come from a State that is a large State with very few people. The gas tax costs us twice as much per person as it costs people who live in New York because they do not drive as far as we do for much of anything. I mentioned the other day I have a friend from New York who described for me once she and her family were going to leave Yonkers, NY, I think, or Brooklyn, or one of those areas, and drive to New Jersey to see an aunt and an uncle. It was 60 or 80 miles, I guess. So they packed an emergency kit for their trunk and put blankets in the trunk, took food along and got all squared away to take the 70 mile drive, because those who live in New York do not drive 70 miles very often. It is a big