

reveal massive cheap energy misuse and waste in the agriculture system; considering community design around live-work-play areas as opposed to commuting; and raising concerns that short-term greed in the energy economic system will lead to further economic class division and injustices. Congress cannot allow our economy to decline to a survival of the richest over the general public without inciting class warfare. We are seeing the beginnings of mass protest worldwide—trucker strikes, etc.

Thoughts on Congressional priorities.

Short-term: Get the Department of Energy to be pro-active. US-DOE has lots of information on their web site but little seems to be circulating in terms of press releases, supplements to K-12 or university education, advice to businesses about how to conserve and make better energy investments leading to sustainability.

Do not give blanket permission to energy companies to use non-renewable resources (e.g. drilling on land, off-shore, sensitive areas, dirty coal, etc.) until a parallel energy use reduction for sustainability system is working. Using our children's and grandchildren's resources to feed the pig of US energy consumption levels and obscene energy company profits now would be immoral.

Do more to expand public education around energy and resource conservation for a sustainable US energy future. This should be a crash project. I wrote to you, Sen. Craig and Rep. Simpson recommending that the 2005 Federal Energy Bill include funding for education. There is not a penny. So market forces (AKA Greed) are driving the energy train now. Coordinate all the players in the energy mess: governments (federal, state, and local); corporations and other businesses; non-government/non-profit organizations (information and advocacy, compassionate action for impacted people); and, organized crime (like Enron-thinking companies who are taking windfall profits). Use principles of social marketing that uses commercial advertising/marketing tools to sell products but for common good purposes (anti-smoking, AIDS prevention, etc.)

Longer/long-term: Get the Department of Energy to be pro-active in developing policy and programs. These folks have not developed viable federal energy policy or jawboned to reduce corporate greed for decades. For example, technology and policy for nuclear power developed into the 70s simply died in favor of status-quo non-renewable resource use and shift of food production (corn) to energy. If the nation could build nuclear bombs and nuclear submarines in crash projects in the past, the nation can do it again!

Support the next President of the United States in collaborating with other nations about energy sustainability worldwide through the United Nations. Revitalize and support treaties and alliances among groups willing to sacrifice and change to achieve sustainability on the planet. Without this effort there will be conflict and violence over competition for dwindling non-renewable resources. Competition for Iraq oil is the tip of the iceberg here.

Actively promote public education, research and development for the two major non-polluting energy sources: nuclear power and solar power. Support renewable energy research into smaller make-a-difference energy contributions such as wind, tidal, geothermal, etc. Support research in related technology such as: high-MPG vehicles, innovative mass transit, and improved batteries to store solar/wind energy, easy-to-use sensors for home and business energy audit (thermal/electrical waste). Pay for energy research by cutting back on spending for fear

reduction by violence—reduce military missions in Iraq and Afghanistan and shift to political, diplomatic, economic efforts with other nations involved.

Use the national energy crisis as a lever to re-think the role of corporations. Once corporations were set up to help remove liability from individuals so they would take risk, invest, and build enterprise for America and Americans. Over the past few decades, corporations have lost their social responsibility and think of top management and shareholders as the only stakeholders worthy of decisions. But corporations are the nation's best hope for good jobs and 'doing well by doing good.' If you folk cannot help get corporations back into part of the American dream for all Americans then the masses will push for government shift toward socialism. I lived and worked in the UK for many years and know the stifling effect of an entitlement mentality.

LAURENCE.

I am a Federal Police Officer, and I work at the Department of Veterans Affairs hospital in Boise. I live 50 miles from the VA, so I have a daily commute of 100 miles. My wife and I would consider moving closer to Boise; however, she is a federal employee at the Mountain Home Air Force Base. She has a 20-mile daily commute (roundtrip). I prefer for her to have a shorter commute than me.

We do see the effects of the higher gas prices. I drive a 2002 Ford Ranger 4X4. I never wanted to own a full-size truck, and I am glad I bought the Ranger. However, the best mileage I can get is about 21 mpg. I would hate to sell my truck, because we need it for working on our land. Besides that, it is tough to get a load of lumber at the Home Depot in a little economy car. So, I eat the gas prices and continue to work at my good federal job. We are cutting back on some of the things we like to do, such as go out to dinner, golf, and travel. These are all things that help the economy, and we enjoy doing them. But something has to be done, hence the cutbacks. I am also spending the night in Boise at least one night a week so I can avoid the commute, and the gas station. I do not like being away from my family, but it is another sacrifice I have to make to save at the pump.

I hate to think about the future, as the price of gas will be passed down to food, clothing, and other essential elements of life. I pray that the government will open up drilling, build more refineries, and start building more nuclear plants. We need to cut our ties with OPEC and other corrupt oil-producing countries.

Congress, please help us!

GREG, *Mountain Home.*

I am happy to see you working on the renewable energy efficiency caucus. For 28 years before recent retirement, I founded and owned the first solar electricity equipment business in Idaho, providing electric systems for homes located beyond the reach of power lines, of which there are many in our state. My own home has been primarily powered by solar and wind since 1978.

I would like to point out that Idaho drivers actually do have some important choices available which you did not mention at the start of your newsletter where you said we have no choice but to keep driving. The choice of exactly what vehicle we drive, as well as consolidating travel for efficiency can cut family fuel costs by 25% or more. Traveling in Europe and Central America one sees many fuel-efficient vehicles that are not even available to Americans: the small diesel flatbeds that carry more weight than a pick-up truck and use less fuel to do it (they are slower going up hills). While traveling in Ireland and England for a month last

year, we did not see even one standard pick-up truck, for the reason of fuel efficiency. And I did see many quality small cars and scooters that are not imported to the US, such as a motor scooter with seat back and roof by BMW.

I would also question whether your efforts to stifle climate change legislation in trade for avoiding high fuel costs in the short term make economic sense in the long-term interests of US citizens. If what is said of climate change effects comes to pass, those with credentials to know have shown that taking no action to mitigate those effects now may not be in the best interests of the country or our descendants. Please consider the long range balance of benefit here.

I have watched inventors working on their own electric cars (Orin Bridges, now deceased, here in Sandpoint converted his car to electric plug-in and drove it 15 miles to town and back in the 1990s, and recharged it from solar panels on the roof of his mountain house). I have seen buses of college kids come through teaching classes on bio-diesel, which powered the bus they traveled in, also around year 2000. And for decades I sold and installed solar electric modules as the most economical power option for people living over half a mile from the nearest power line.

Now that world fuel production has not increased for three years running and fuel demand and prices are rising, we are seeing tremendous mainstream progress in looking at sustainable fuel sources and independence from imported oil. Please check the January edition of Scientific American for a national solution for the electric grid that uses technology available today, and costs no more than the Iraq war has cost to date.

STEVE.

TRIBUTE TO CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I have the honor of rising today to recognize an important part of Detroit's public education, my alma mater, Detroit Central High School, which is celebrating the 150th anniversary of its opening.

Since 1858, when the first 24 students entered a single classroom, thousands of students have passed through its doors. It was originally conceived to help prepare students to study at the University of Michigan, then just a few decades old itself. Today, Central has been continuously accredited by the University of Michigan for more than 135 consecutive years.

It has occupied the current location at Tuxedo Avenue and La Salle Boulevard for more than 80 years. I was fortunate to study and walk the halls there for 4 of those years.

Central alumni have gone on to win a Nobel Prize and win Grammy Awards; make countless contributions to the Detroit community and to Michigan; own professional sports teams and play professional sports; and fight on behalf of our Nation in war, sometimes making the ultimate sacrifice.

In all these pursuits and many more, Central alumni have been challenged to live up to our school's motto, adopted in 1861: *Carpe Diem*, "seize the day." Our experiences at Central have helped prepare us to do that.

Recently, Central has faced challenges unparalleled in the school's history. School budgets are tighter than

ever, standardized tests offer frustrating assessments of progress, and dropout rates and graduation rates alike moved in the wrong directions. But, thanks to the hard work and commitment of over 1,000 current students and teachers, in the past few years Central has begun an impressive turnaround that is heartening to us alumni.

I offer my congratulations on this 150th anniversary and every hope that Detroit Central High School will continue to provide excellent education and imbue students with the skills and outlook to seize the day and find success in school and in the years that follow.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE AVERN COHN

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a great citizen of Michigan, the Honorable Avern Cohn. Avern has distinguished himself as a leader among leaders in Michigan's legal community and the Michigan community at large. Later this month Avern's synagogue, Congregation Shaarey Zedek, will offer a tribute to him and I am honored to join in recognizing his many accomplishments and contributions to our community life that he has so strengthened and supported.

Professionally, for nearly three decades Judge Cohn has served on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. He currently serves as the Senior Judge, a position he has held for the past nine years. His quick wit and sharp mind have left a lasting impression on the countless attorneys who have argued before him. Throughout his career, Avern's guiding beacon has been justice, and his legacy is one of true independence and impartiality.

Avern's commitment to justice in Michigan has extended well beyond his courtroom. He is a past director of the Detroit Bar Association, a former trustee of the Detroit Bar Foundation, and served as director of the American Judicature Society. Before he was appointed to the court, he led a successful private practice that continues to flourish today. He also served the people of Michigan in an array of positions including as chairperson of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission, chairperson of the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners, and as a member of the Michigan Social Welfare Commission.

As a member of the board of trustees of Shaarey Zedek, a former president of the Jewish Welfare Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, and a past vice president of the American Jewish Committee, Avern has used his intellect and drive to the great benefit of our Jewish community. He has also helped bring the focus and resources of these organizations to the fight for the poorest and most vulnerable among us. He is a mensch in the truest sense: his wholehearted dedication to a host of noble causes has marked his character and his life.

I should mention as well that it was Avern's father who introduced my par-

ents to each other. I am proud to call Avern my cousin.

Avern is recognized far and wide as a rarity. All who have known him, who have had the good fortune to work with him, or who have come before him are appreciative of his unique commitment to doing what is right. Many who have never heard his name have benefited and will continue to benefit from his lifetime of good deeds. Barb joins me in offering our thanks and congratulations to Avern. Mazel Tov!

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

SACRAMENTO RIVER CATS TRIPLE-A CHAMPIONSHIP

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am pleased to recognize the 2008 Minor League Triple-A baseball champions, the Sacramento River Cats.

On September 16, 2008, the Sacramento River Cats, of the Pacific Coast League, PCL, defeated the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees, of the International League, 4 to 1 in the Bricktown Showdown to become back-to-back Triple-A champions. Sacramento is the Triple-A affiliate of the Oakland Athletics.

The Sacramento River Cats finished the regular season atop the Pacific Coast League Southern Division with a record of 83 wins and 61 losses. The River Cats were assisted this season by their always faithful fan base, which has led Triple-A in attendance for nine consecutive seasons.

In the opening playoff series between the River Cats and the Salk Lake City Bees, the River Cats excelled by scoring 39 runs en route to a 3-games-to-1 series victory. The series victory demonstrated the River Cats' depth of talent as four starting pitchers, four relief pitchers, two infielders, and one outfielder were called up to the Oakland Athletics before the series began.

In the Pacific Coast League Championship Series, the River Cats defeated the Texas Rangers Triple-A affiliate Oklahoma City Red Hawks, winning the series three games to one to repeat as PCL champions. During this series, the River Cats proved their ability to perform on the road by achieving two of their three victories in Oklahoma. The win also earned the River Cats their fourth Pacific Coast League Championship in the last 6 years.

In the Triple-A championship game, River Cats manager Todd Steversen showcased his talented pitching staff. The River Cats used six pitchers who combined for nine strikeouts while only giving up a single run. The victory gave the Pacific Coast League all three of the Triple-A championships since the Triple-A championship game was reinstated 3 years ago.

As the River Cats' fans, players, and staff gather to celebrate this remarkable accomplishment, I would like to congratulate them on an outstanding season.●

NORTH CAROLINA AZALEA FESTIVAL

• Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I recognize the 62nd North Carolina Azalea Festival, NCAF, which will be held from April 1-5, 2009, in the Greater Wilmington area.

The Azalea Festival is a showcase for Wilmington's rich array of artwork, gardens, history and a testimony to the rich heritage of coastal Carolina. This year's celebration marks the 50th anniversary of the Azalea's Festival's name being changed from the Wilmington Azalea Festival to the North Carolina Azalea Festival.

The NCAF is Wilmington's annual community celebration and the largest festival of its kind in the State. This festival encourages volunteerism and civic participation as it contributes to the region's economy and promotes the unique qualities of Wilmington's river-to-the-sea community.

The festival's concerts, fairs and special events are viewed by more than 1 million people each year, in person and through media coverage. More than 200,000 people are estimated to attend the annual 2-day street fair, while more than 100,000 gather to watch the festival parade.

It takes an extensive volunteer network to run the NCAF. More than 1,000 volunteers are needed to stage over 125 events ranging from concerts to art shows, a street fair with interactive displays, home and garden tours, a parade, special exhibits, a circus, and a variety of other entertainment and events.

The NCAF generates an additional approximate \$5 million to the area's economy and the Southeast Tourism Society selected the NCAF as one of its top 20 events for the second year in a row.

I am pleased to recognize the unique cultural and historical contributions of the 62nd annual North Carolina Azalea Festival.●

RECOGNIZING GULFSTREAM AEROSPACE CORPORATION

• Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge an important occasion in the history of Savannah, GA, and the business-aviation industry—the 50th anniversary of Gulfstream flight.

Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation got its start in 1958 when Grumman Aircraft Engineering Company, a company known for military aircraft production, developed the first aircraft specifically designed for business travel.

On August 14, 1958, Grumman test pilots Carl Alber and Fred Rowley took that aircraft—the twin-engine turbo-prop Gulfstream I—on its maiden flight over the company's headquarters in Bethpage, NY. After 800 hours of additional testing, the G-1 received Federal Aviation Administration certification on May 21, 1959.