

for working-age Americans fell by about \$2,400.

"Americans work the longest hours of any people in the industrialized world," the senator said. "We even surpassed Japan."

But despite all that hard work—despite explosive improvements in technology and increased worker productivity—the middle class is struggling, losing ground and there's a very real possibility that the next generation of workers will have a lower standard of living than today's.

The letters to Senator Sanders offer a glimpse into the real lives of ordinary people in an economic environment that was sculpted to favor the very rich. One of the letters was from a woman in central Vermont who said she and her husband are in their mid-30s, are college-educated and have two young children.

"We are feeling distraught," she said, "that we may never 'get ahead' but will always be pedaling to just keep up."

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, a day or so ago, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, now numbering close to 800, are heartbreaking and touching. It is not just filling the tank; these high energy prices touch every aspect of our lives—family time, food prices, work commutes, the list goes on and on. Many Idahoans have taken efforts to cut back on the niceties to accommodate the necessities, but now far too many face the choice of which necessity to ignore—gas or food, job or family. For years, Congress has unsuccessfully grappled with a national energy policy; now we are at a point where decisions must be made, compromises must be negotiated if we are to finally be forward-thinking. This isn't only a question of what we are handing future generations; it's affecting families right here, right now. It is not just Idahoans. It is an issue that touches the live of every single American, no matter their socioeconomic status.

In an effort to seek solutions rather than focus only on the trouble, I have also asked Idahoans to share how they want Congress to resolve it, and the suggestions are voluminous and wide-ranging. Some start simply with conservation efforts, something that I have long supported, while others encourage increased offshore oil drilling and increased domestic production, more sustainable alternative and renewable energy sources, stronger support for nuclear energy options and more efficient transportation options. Nearly all have expressed concerns for not just their future, but for the future of their children and grandchildren. And they are adamant about Congress moving beyond half-truths and partisan politics to find solutions. While I may differ in my opinions on some suggestions, I am thrilled that so many have taken time to share their thoughts with me. Some have shared research, videos and book rec-

ommendations. To respect that effort, I plan on submitting every e-mail sent to me through energyprices@crapo.senate.gov to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. And to keep attention on this matter, I will be submitting them a few at a time every day until every one has been submitted. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention. I plan to continue working to find other ways to bring these stories to the attention of my colleagues in Congress. Today, I am starting this process with the following comments from Idahoans.

I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD comments from Idahoans.

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

DEAR SENATOR CRAPO, I am very interested in the debate concerning rude oil and energy prices. I am a wheat farmer by profession and have been excited about the increased wheat prices, however, all of the input costs have significantly increased due to the fact that all inputs have either direct or indirect links to the price of crude oil. Freight costs have significantly increased across the board. Manufacturing costs for steel have soared, partly due to the energy costs. Pivot prices have increased by 20% this year and are expected to significantly increase next year also. Fertilizer prices, which were already unrealistically high last year have tripled from last year's prices. Although the price of wheat will likely be more than commensurate with the input costs this year, if commodity prices fall before the decline of input prices, (including and especially energy prices) farmers throughout the country will be in serious trouble.

In addition to the difficulties associated with farm input prices, my family's household income has not increased in proportion to the costs of household goods such as food, clothing, and family items. The relief check from the government will not come close to compensating for increased pricing, and will also decrease the value of the dollar and hence cause more inflated pricing, as well as increase our national debt.

Most Americans would agree that caring for our environment is important, however, a relatively small group of radical environmentalists have been using their screaming lobby to set policies which are extremely detrimental to the economy as well as the environment. How is it that oil drilled from the Middle East and freighted across the ocean is less harmful to "mother earth" than drilling in a single square mile in Alaska? I am adamantly opposed to the idea that we should be dependant upon the Middle East for oil when we have enough to last for at least one hundred years in reserve here in the United States. We are likely to have alternative technology to decrease our demand upon oil and most likely oil will be obsolete as an energy source within less than 50 years. Please listen to the less vocal majority who are pleading for drastically decreasing the restrictions and regulations on drilling and refining our domestic oil.

Sincerely,

LLOYD WARD.

DEAR MIKE CRAPO, We live on Robie Creek out side of Boise. My husband commutes to Nampa 2 days a week to work. We are also Ushers for Boise State University and have to commute to Boise for work. With the increase in Gas Price, our fuel costs have risen 148.00 in the past three months. It was al-

ready way to expensive. We are in our 70's so this is a hardship for us.

John McCain stating he will not drill in Alaska makes me so mad. I live next door to a lady who spent years in Barrow and the North Slope of Alaska. She said drilling would not hurt anything because there is nothing there. I have suggested Mr. McCain make a trip and check this out personally instead of listening to the environmentalist who has put us in this position in the first place along with the Socialist who want this country destroyed. I also think it is a shame to listen to the Stupid people who are costing us Billions to prevent global warming. The last I knew, God was in-charge and has been thru thousands of years of climate change. Who is going to pay back the tax payers when this is proven to be a political sham?

It would be so refreshing if we the people could ever get the truth about anything and have all of the agenda bleeped out.

BESS, Boise.

DEAR SENATOR CRAPO: We have noticed a big difference in prices in the past year. Instead of taking two vehicles to work five days a week, my husband and I have traveled together this past year to save on the gas. We leave our home in Firth, (our work hours are different), and he drops me off at work and travels to the other side of Idaho Falls to get to his job. I stay at work during the lunch hour and an extra hour after work until he comes to pick me up at night.

It used to cost us \$320.00 a month one year ago taking two vehicles to work. Now with one vehicle we are spending a minimum of \$340.00 just to get to work.

We also have the added concern of my husband's elderly parents. They will need our help more and we try to go see them once a month. We are spending \$100.00 per trip to get from Firth to Wendell and back.

1. Why isn't anyone concerned about the high oil consumption of container ships that bring goods from other countries?

2. Why are we allowing China and other countries to drill off of our shores when we can't drill off Florida?

3. What about all the wells that were drilled and capped in the Western Wyoming area and other areas of the U.S.?

4. Why are we not pushing harder for nuclear energy and other options and also expanding refinery capacity that could free us from dependence on other nations? They have us under their thumbs.

5. Why are the minority environmentalists controlling so much of our lives? We believe they are not being realistic and subjecting us to other nations' whims. Global warming, it snowed here last week, second week of June. Where is the global warming? There is more global warming controlled by the sun and not man. The earth has always had ups and downs in its weather patterns. Why doesn't anybody ask an environmentalist what they live in, what they wear and how they get to their protests? It seems they are protesting everything they use.

Thank you for work you are doing and asking for our opinions.

MICHAEL AND SUSAN, Firth.

DEAR SENATOR CRAPO, thank your for giving me the opportunity to write to you on this issue and also for your efforts on our behalf.

I have a PhD in Aerospace Engineering and more than thirty years experience.

I can only address the engineering aspects of this question, not the political aspects, though I am afraid that the problem is largely a political and psychological one, not a technical one.

The technological facts are these: We can have energy independence and a 75% reduction in air pollution at the same time and it

wouldn't cost the taxpayers a dime. In order to achieve this we would have to convert our power generation from fossil fuel to nuclear and hydroelectric, and switch to electric cars, trucks and trains. The technology for this exists now, although some of it is still in the laboratory. What is preventing its implementation is government regulation.

After World War II, the utilities put forward a plan to convert all of this country's power generation to nuclear and hydroelectric. The plan was eminently feasible, but was blocked by government regulation. During the 1970s, congress passed what was popularly know as the "small hydro bill".

This excellent piece of legislation sought to encourage cities and towns to take advantage of their local rivers and streams to generate power. This would have given local communities a reliable source of clean, low cost power, and reduced the need for long distance transmission lines and dependence on the grid. Implementation of this plan was blocked by the environmentalists.

Solar energy and wind power are not practical alternatives.

Nuclear power is safe. In more than fifty years of generating power in this country, not a single person has ever been killed or injured by a nuclear accident. So far as I am aware, not a single person has ever been killed or injured by a nuclear power plant with its reactor in a containment building. The accident at Chernobyl was possible only because the reactors there were not housed in a containment building.

Nuclear power is inexpensive. What is making nuclear power plants expensive is excessive and irrational government regulation, based not on sound science and engineering, but on a desire to appease the environmentalists. This was true as far back as 1967. The effect of this government regulation is not to make nuclear power plants safer, but to make them impossible.

Government regulation, especially NHTSA, is preventing entrepreneurs from making electric cars. There is not a single company manufacturing electric cars in this country for sale to the public. That is a disgrace. The FMVSS (Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards) are nonsensical gibberish. NHTSA needs to be abolished and the politicians and the bureaucrats need to stop interfering in car design.

In summary, the whole huge body of excessive, irrational government regulation which has piled up over that last 60 years needs to be repealed.

Government is the problem. The solution is for government to get out of the way.

Most respectfully yours,

STEFAN, PhD (aerospace engineering).

SENATOR CRAPO: I couldn't possibly disagree w/you more with respect to the current energy situation. I think that the high prices for gas/diesel that we're experiencing are a necessary evil. It is time for this entire country, but our politicians in Washington (yes, this means you!) especially, to wake up & realize that the amount of petroleum on this planet based is finite. The current problem with prices should not be dealt w/by some half-assed politically motivated Band-Aid.

The United States has a chance to be at the forefront of research into whatever technology will ultimately replace petroleum-based energy. Rather than subsidizing ethanol production from corn (absolutely no advantage in terms of use of petroleum—it's merely at a different phase of production), why not step up to the plate & provide incentives for research into alternative energy. Instead of the U.S. depending on foreign oil, why not make the rest of the world dependent on U.S. company patents for whatever

ultimately replaces petroleum as the leading energy technology?

Thanks for listening,

TODD, Boise.

DEAR MIKE, We appreciate this opportunity to share with you how energy prices are affecting us and hope this will help you convince your colleagues that something needs to be done NOW!!

We are farmers in southern Idaho. We are helping to keep this country fed. It is 40 miles to our nearest town where we shop for all our needs—from groceries to supplies to run the farm. Our fuel is delivered from 40 miles away as well. We have no public transportation to rely on so we have no choice but to keep driving our vehicles to supply our needs and to try to conserve where we can. Just today, we had to drive 90 miles one way to obtain a repair part for our hay harvesting equipment. That trip cost us nearly twice what it would have cost this time last year. Diesel for our tractors is nearly \$5.00/gallon. If Congress doesn't act now, this country is going to wake up to food shortages because we won't be able to afford to keep filling our fuel tanks to keep the food pipeline full. Trucks won't be able to afford to keep transporting food to the stores and one day in the not too distant future, the store shelves will be empty. What will Congress do then about the riots and other violence that will result? We want our energy companies to drill for oil NOW, both on and off shore! We want our energy companies to drill in ANWR, NOW!!! We want our energy companies to be able to utilize Coal-to-Oil technologies NOW!!! We want to be free of our dependence on the Middle East for our energy needs. If nuclear energy can be utilized safely, let's use it.

Let's use wind turbines. Let's utilize solar farms on our vast acreages of public lands here in Idaho. We must act before our economy is destroyed. It will take decades to repair the damage if Congress doesn't act NOW!!!!

Feel free to share our story.

Sincerely,

KIRT AND JANET, Malta.

You've got this one about right.

Our problems as usual are the result of allowing political expediency to make bad policy.

We can no longer afford to genuflect at the green altar. By all means let's streamline the approval process for new nuclear plants and begin drilling ASAP in ANWR and off both coasts. THE STATES DO NOT HAVE SOVEREIGNTY OVER THEIR COASTAL WATERS. If the federal government can tie up half of Idaho, it should also be able to approve drilling off the coasts of FL, CA et al.

In your letter, you skip over another aggravating factor inflicted on our economy by Congress. I refer of course to the ethanol mandate. The primaries are over. Iowa has once again been shamelessly pandered to. Repeal the ethanol mandate, eliminate tariffs on imported (Brazilian sugar based) ethanol. Watch fuel and food cost drop simultaneously. This should be a no brainer even for Congress.

STU, Donnelly.

SENATOR CRAPO: I first want to thank you for even being considerate enough to ask my opinion. Not asking constituents is a major problem with our politics these days but that issue is for another email.

My family is fortunate enough that the rising energy costs are, at this point, a frustrating inconvenience and not a major issue as it is with many. What is of concern to me is our country's willingness to be held hostage by others in the world. We have vast re-

serves of our own fossil fuel that we refuse to develop in addition to our refusal to develop nuclear energy, wind and solar sources. As I understand it, we do not want to "damage" the environment. I don't want to "damage" our environment either but GOD has blessed this country with resources and the technology for developing those resources has changed for the better in the last 50 years.

I am also tired of the rhetoric that 'in Europe energy costs have been much higher than here for decades'. Well, the plain truth is I don't live in Europe. The USA has been, until outsourcing became our corporate goal, the most advanced, the most productive, the most ingenious, the most prosperous, the most giving nation in ALL of history. Besides, why don't I hear the cost comparison with Venezuela? Gasoline there is \$0.25 per gallon. Why don't we become more like them? Not that I would want to, but you get my drift.

Not to belabor the issue, but the rising cost of energy is only one of the visual symptoms of a much deeper problem. The problem of being stripped of our national identity, of falling victim to the erroneous global warming scam, of the socialist philosophy of wealth distribution, just to mention a few elitist liberal doctrines.

Anyway, I want to thank you again for your interest in my thoughts. Keep up the good fight.

RUSSELL, Hayden.

Fuel prices are devastating every section of our economy. A family reunion trip from Nampa to Seattle and Return in my diesel pickup and camper cost \$460 for fuel alone. Idaho Power has implemented two major price increases since the first of the year. Intermountain Gas has raised their price recently by nearly 9 percent. Our food prices are skyrocketing while our government tries to substitute fuel from food for ample resources of energy in the ground we walk on but aren't allowed to drill for.

Congress and the administration should be ashamed that we are not utilizing safe nuclear energy and expanding use of our coal resources. You (collectively) have stopped the development of nearly all natural resources available to us and also stopped the building of refineries to keep up with the U.S. demand for oil.

It has made life much tougher for those of us who aren't depending on the public to take care of us.

Shame on all of you.

LARRY, Nampa.

COMMENDING MOUNT OLIVE TROJANS

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate a college baseball team that won a national title last month.

I am speaking of Mount Olive College in Mount Olive, NC. They beat Ouachita Baptist in a 6-2 victory to win the NCAA Division II National Baseball Championship—the first national championship title of any kind in Mount Olive College history.

The Mount Olive Trojans finished the season with a 58-6 overall record. The Trojans ended their season strong winning 24 out of their final 26 games.

This win marks an especially extraordinary one for Mount Olive College Trojans. This is the Trojans first-ever national championship win in any sport. In a town made famous for their