

(b)), Medicaid (subsection (e)), and other health areas (subsection (f)). The revisions are contingent on certain conditions being met, including that such legislation not worsen the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2008 through 2013 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2008 through 2018.

I find that H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008, satisfies the conditions of the reserve funds to provide economic relief for American families and improve America's health. Therefore, pursuant to sections 221(f) and 227, I am adjusting the aggregates in the 2009 budget resolution, as well as the allocation provided to the Senate Finance Committee.

I ask unanimous consent that the following revisions to S. Con. Res. 70 be printed in the RECORD.

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

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009—S. CON. RES. 70; REVISIONS TO THE CONFERENCE AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 221 (F) DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROVIDE ECONOMIC RELIEF FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES AND SECTION 227 DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE AMERICAS HEALTH

[In billions of dollars]

Section 101

(1)(A) Federal Revenues:	
FY 2008	1,875.401
FY 2009	2,029.653
FY 2010	2,204.695
FY 2011	2,413.285
FY 2012	2,506.063
FY 2013	2,626.571
(1)(B) Change in Federal Revenues:	
FY 2008	-3,999
FY 2009	-67.746
FY 2010	21.297
FY 2011	-14.785
FY 2012	-151.532
FY 2013	-123.648
(2) New Budget Authority	
FY 2008	2,564.247
FY 2009	2,538.301
FY 2010	2,566.665
FY 2011	2,692.500
FY 2012	2,734.141
FY 2013	2,858.583
(3) Budget Outlays	
FY 2008	2,466.678
FY 2009	2,573.384
FY 2010	2,625.623
FY 2011	2,711.441
FY 2012	2,719.543
FY 2013	2,851.826

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009—S. CON. RES. 70; REVISIONS TO THE CONFERENCE AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 221 (F) DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROVIDE ECONOMIC RELIEF FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES AND SECTION 227 DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE AMERICAS HEALTH

[In millions of dollars]

Current Allocation to Senate Finance Committee	
FY 2008 Budget Authority	1,100,859
FY 2008 Outlays	1,102,857
FY 2009 Budget Authority	1,085,721
FY 2009 Outlays	1,087,208
FY 2009–2013 Budget Authority	6,165,556
FY 2009–2013 Outlays	6,172,365
Adjustments	
FY 2008 Budget Authority	1,942
FY 2008 Outlays	1,924
FY 2009 Budget Authority	6,633
FY 2009 Outlays	6,516

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009—S. CON. RES. 70; REVISIONS TO THE CONFERENCE AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 221 (F) DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROVIDE ECONOMIC RELIEF FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES AND SECTION 227 DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE AMERICAS HEALTH—Continued

[In millions of dollars]

FY 2009–2013 Budget Authority	-3,859
FY 2009–2013 Outlays	-2,070
Revised Allocation to Senate Finance Committee	
FY 2008 Budget Authority	1,102,801
FY 2008 Outlays	1,104,781
FY 2009 Budget Authority	1,092,354
FY 2009 Outlays	1,093,724
FY 2009–2013 Budget Authority	6,161,697
FY 2009–2013 Outlays	6,170,295

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering over 1,000, are heartbreaking and touching. To respect their efforts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through energy_prices@rapo.senate.gov to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

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

Senator Crapo, Thank you so much for all you are doing for the citizens in Idaho. Most of all, thank you for your assistance with my disability issues. I would like to share my story. I have been a Registered Nurse for 28 years working fulltime and overtime. In 2005, I developed some heart issues, but, at that time, was able to return to work. In August 2007, the heart condition deteriorated to the point I can no longer work. I have been denied disability twice thus far. My physician has wanted me to attend cardiac rehabilitation, which we do not have available in Lewiston or Clarkston. The nearest is Moscow, Idaho, 30 miles away. Due to being turned down on disability and the rising cost of gasoline, I can no longer afford to drive to Moscow for the cardiac rehabilitation I need.

Thank you again. You truly seem to care more about your constituents than any other legislator I have ever encountered. I will be campaigning very strongly for you when the time comes.

JOY, Lewiston.

Senator, fuel is a big issue here in Idaho. As a lifelong Republican, I am wondering why, after six years with a Republican President, Senate and House, nothing was done then. What we are seeing now is a result from a lack of activity back then. I watched Bill Gates and the oil company execs totally dominate our Congressional folks. You have authorized spending billions for Iraq, but did nothing to promote hydrogen fuel cell development here. I think you are pandering to

the oil companies. It is said that fuel for the hydrogen vehicles would be too hard to dispense. Why not use it for schools where the vehicles could be fueled at the home base? We burn literally hundreds of thousands of gallons of fuel a year just in our local school districts. When you decide to act for the "real" future, then we will support you. At this house, Obama is looking better and better every day. Obama has earned his way this far. McCain has no answers other than a few pennies off the gas tax. Get real, Senator.

CHARLIE, Caldwell.

You asked what these fuel prices are doing to us. I live on a fixed income of \$650.00 a month, pay \$450 a month just for rent. So guess what? By the time you buy food, it is gone and I cannot afford to drive 80 miles a day and make \$7.00 an hour. I would spend it all just for gas, but I'm sure everybody else is in the same boat. But thanks for listening to an old man moan. I used to like to go fishing sometimes, but not this year, I guess. Thanks again.

MARCELLUS, Rupert.

Senator Crapo, I would love to share my story with you. I have a small business that takes me out of state a lot. I work on X-ray machines in hospitals around the country. It has gotten to where most hospitals cannot afford to replace their equipment, and my prices are going up due to travel. The higher my prices go, the less work I get due to short budgets, and so on. It has gotten to the point that I only have one job scheduled so far this year. I do not know how I am going to stay in business much longer.

I cannot understand how Congress can sit on their butts and say we cannot pump our own oil due to environmental concerns while China pumps 50 miles off of our cost. It is time we put the few liberals in their place and start taking care of our own before we have our own revolution, and the people take back our country from the do nothing government. I hope you act fast.

TODD.

Mike, Thank you for the opportunity to share my views on the energy crises.

First of all, I think the ethanol program is the biggest boondoggle the United States has ever supported. It takes almost as much energy to produce a gallon of ethanol as the gallon gives back. It cost more per gallon than gasoline, and gives far fewer miles per gallon than gasoline. It takes the food away from the livestock and poultry that we need to eat, or at least makes the feed for them more expensive. Are we not going backwards here?

I fully support nuclear energy. It is the only way to go for dependable electrical power generation. Unlike coal and natural gas, there is no fuel to mine or drill for, no transportation cost for that fuel and no air pollution resulting from burning that fuel.

Wind power electrical generation is a fine resource to pursue. It is very valuable in reducing the electrical load on the base loaded electrical generators. The more we can reduce the load on the base generators, the more energy we save.

We also need to expand our domestic oil production. We need to drill and get into production, ANWR in northeast Alaska. We need to get this done before Prudhoe Bay is depleted so we can utilize the existing Trans-Alaska pipeline. If I recall correctly, that pipeline and all related equipment has to be removed once it becomes inactive.

While on the subject of Alaska, I understand that some of the contention of the Iraqi people is how to divide up their oil wealth. How about looking at the system the

state of Alaska uses to divide up their oil wealth? Every man, women and child receives a check for the same amount as everyone else. The oil fund is inflation-proofed before the amount of the checks is determined. Why do people think they always need to reinvent the wheel? Alaska's system is fair, simple and it works.

With the profits the oil companies are reporting, I see no need for tax credits for any oil company. If they cannot get done what they need to do with those kinds of profits, the tax credits are not going to make the difference. I really think it is time for the oil companies to be subject to a pricing commission, like the electrical utilities are, only on the federal level. Other commodity producers that produce things that the people of the United States have to have are subject to pricing commissions i.e. Public Utilities Commissions, why not the oil companies? The whole United States would grind to halt and a lot of our population would freeze to death in the winter without oil. I would say that constitutes a need for a product that should be subject to a pricing commission.

RUSS, *Payette*.

On a fixed income and maybe only a few years to live due to chronic asthma and advancing COPD, it is already making it hard—doctor appointments, and to go see and help my 93-year-old mother. I am 65 and have maybe 2 more years to live. What kind of quality of life can I expect with the price of gas going up so fast that before you can finish filling your car the station attendants are out changing the price of gas? This has happened twice in the last month. I have a 10-gallon tank and get 35 miles to the gallon on a 1988 Toyota Corolla. It takes about three tanks a month for all the running I have to do. It used to cost me \$55.00 a month to fill car; now it cost \$123.00 a month. If gas goes up to \$7.00 a gallon, it will cost \$210.00 a month just for gas. What do I do? Do I not eat so I can go to doctor's appointments or do I eat and die sooner because I cannot afford to put gas in my car? Thousands of people are in the same boat as I am—we either forget about health concerns or eating. I knew one lady a few miles from where I live that was shop lifting dog food and eating it just to survive. She has died now, but there is going to be a lot more of this going on. It is a shame that the Congress has not got off their butts and allowed more domestic drilling for oil in our country. We know where the oil is; let us get to drilling and tell the oil cartels to stuff it where the sun does not shine. Something else I do not understand is, the other day we drove to Salt Lake City and the refineries were not even working, there was no steam or smoke coming from the cracking towers. Come on—get this mess worked out. We are going to start dropping like sprayed flies out here if Congress does not do something.

RUSSELL, *Heyburn*.

Senator Crapo, A year ago I was spending around \$85 a month for fuel; now my monthly costs are twice that! Thirty percent of the current cost for oil is due to speculation in the unregulated Wall Street venue; the Enron Loophole from 2001 allows this!! First, fix this problem! Next, higher fuel mileage per gallon in a shorter period of time needs to be mandated!! Third, a major emphasis on alternative renewable fuels; not more drilling in our country or off shore for oil and gas; including blowing the tops off of mountains for coal!! In addition, no more nuclear reactors as they use too much water and generate radioactive waste that lasts for hundreds of years!! We can do this and most Idahoans and Americans are demanding such a plan from our government leadership! Brazil

did it in five years and are we any less capable than they are? I think not! You Republicans, especially, are under too much influence by the oil, gas and coal companies to continue doing business as usual!! We need truly green changes in our country, not more of the same.

JOY, *Hayden*.

I, like most Americans, have been affected by the rising fuel prices. My budget cannot sustain the \$60 per tank cost to fill my car with gas. Instead of sitting back and complaining about high gas prices, I have chosen to find alternate forms of transportation whenever possible. I ride my bicycle to work every day, and use the public transportation and carpooling whenever possible for longer trips. When I am conscious of my transportation choices, I can make a tank of gas last a month.

Our country needs to step up and take responsibility for our energy choices. We need to become less dependent on foreign oil, yes; but we need to do so by changing the root of the problem instead of implementing a temporary band-aid on our problems by drilling for oil in our country's pristine and sensitive environmental areas. We need to concentrate our resources on developing cleaner energy rather than looking for ways to sustain our irresponsible use of energy. Better public transportation options, fuel conservation incentives, and increased research and investment in cleaner energy are the sustainable answers. Drilling in ANWR is not. The change will be a bit painful in the short term, but we need to have the foresight as a country to understand that long term solutions are the right ones.

Sincerely,

ROSS.

My son-in-law works for a large gas station corporation, routing trucks to different stations and flies almost weekly to Houston and Atlanta and says THERE IS NO GAS SHORTAGE, just manipulation. Please tell people the truth about the oil and gas reserves we could have available (example: South Dakota, etc.). Our story personally: We live in a rural area, 13 miles from the nearest town and 2 hours from a city big enough to purchase from larger retailers. Our fuel cost is \$35.00 to go to WalMart, round trip! We recently purchased an economy car (that we couldn't really afford), and now the trip will cost around \$20. This is if fuel stays at \$4. Our daughter has Prader-Willi Syndrome, and we travel 2-4-8 hours one way for medical appointments about eight times a year. We do not feel the ten cents a mile from Medicaid is worth the hassle for reimbursement. We are drowning in fuel extortion costs. Must we be forced to move from a rural setting to the city? Please help.

MARGARET.

Senator Crapo, I want to thank you for taking the initiative on helping Idahoans with the increasing energy costs. I am fortunate enough to only have a two-mile commute to and from work, but I have still noticed a considerable change in the fuel cost's impact on my finances.

I was recently in Salt Lake City where I stopped at a gas station to fill up. I noticed a different-looking pump there which said "natural gas" on it. I had never seen such an option at a fueling station before. Just as I was in awe at the different option, a gentleman drove up in a vehicle and began filling up with this natural gas pump. I struck up a conversation with this man and discovered that natural gas is a growing phenomenon in vehicles there in the Salt Lake City area. The car prices are very similar to

those of petroleum fueled vehicles, but the cost of natural gas was about 63 cents per gallon versus the \$4 I was paying. This experience, of course, made me consider other fueling options.

I know that there are many alternatives to using gasoline to power vehicles such as natural gas, electric, water, and others. Granted, some of these options are not feasible to implement in Idaho. Is it possible to make natural gas an option in this area? I do not know if it is legislation that drives such changes, but I, for one, am ready for some feasible alternatives. I am considering getting a Segue or a GEM (global electric motorcar) as an alternative to relying upon gas powered vehicles. I would appreciate any help in this area, or other incentives to alternative power options for the home. Thank you again for your help on our behalf. Let me know if I can help in any other way.

SETH.

Dear Senator Crapo: Regarding energy prices. We drive less, plan our trips to town with lists, etc. so we know exactly where we are going and in what order to make our trips more efficient. We will not be taking a vacation this year. We will be forced to sell (or give away) our livestock because we cannot afford to pay the price of hay to sustain them over the winter. We will have to buy a different furnace as our current one is oil, or turn down the heat to 55 degrees most of the winter and bundle up (which is what we did last winter).

I do not like government intervention, but some tax credits for alternative energy sources would be nice—credits for wind power, solar power; both of which are in plentiful supply in Idaho. The state government could do a lot to encourage alternative energy sources as well. We all agree that we need to use alternatives, but no one wants a wind generator in their neighborhood. What is wrong with us? Can we not see the future benefits versus our temporary eye appeal?

Also, the government could give some large tax incentives to encourage recycling of plastics, which to my understanding, use over twice the percentage of our oil imports than the manufacture of gasoline. In Texas, the Texas Disposal Company has a recycling center set up in a lot next to the local post office in Alpine (population 6,500) every Saturday. They take all kinds of newspaper, magazines, junk mail, plastics, metal cans, etc. There was even a man who brought his pickup truck down every week to collect glass for recycling. The cost of transporting all of this recycling in Texas would be greater than in Idaho, so why cannot we do that here? Or nationwide?

I noticed in Costco the last few weeks that each swimsuit is set up on these clear plastic molded sheets, which are then stacked one on top of the other. We are overusing plastic! All of this ends up as waste in our landfills. Encouraging a national recycling program would do many positive things, less oil imports would be the biggest and then less waste in our landfills, a huge concern as well.

Seems to me that recycling and a greater usage of alternative energy sources is something that Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals could and should agree upon.

Sincerely,

LISA.

I have four children, and my husband and I have good-paying jobs, probably better than most. We have a low debt load, have stayed away from credit cards and buy things when we have the money. We have never had a vacation in the 24 years that we've been married because we had other places that money needed to go.

Now, even though we have stayed out of debt and only have \$3,000.00 left to pay on our car, we are afraid. Food prices have risen so that last year, my family of six was eating and maintaining a household on \$300.00 per week, and that included gas for the drive my husband has to work. That budget has now increased to \$500.00 per week.

My son, a second-year electrical engineering student at ISU, may not be able to go back to college this year because the gas to get there is just too much on top of the increased cost of tuition. My daughter, a senior this year, cannot get a job because the cost of driving to work would eat up her minimum wage paycheck.

Those of us who work hard, stay out of debt and invest our money in the American way of life are now told to move our money away from U.S. investments and go elsewhere where the economy is more stable, but what does that say about the country that we live in? We do not feel secure, we do not feel safe and we do not feel any comfort in the Senate, Congress or the Presidency. This is summer; when the demand for fuel goes up in the winter and we do not have enough money to pay for gas to go to work, let alone food for our children to eat, how are we going to keep warm or live? This winter, I think this country is going to see many people pushed to the brink of chaos because there is no other choice. Oil needs to be taken off the speculation market. This doesn't just affect our way of life here in the U.S.; it is also affecting world markets and food prices around the globe.

D.S., Rigby.

JOINT ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN VENTURE

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, the New York Times recently published an article entitled "Web Start-up a Joint Israeli-Palestinian Venture" and, as the title suggests, it is a story about a group of Israeli and Palestinian entrepreneurs that have joined forces to start an internet business venture. Mr. President, I will ask to have the New York Times article printed in the RECORD. What is impressive about this story is that technology, in the form of Internet-based video teleconferencing, has been able to jump boundaries to allow people to work together while apart by enabling this business, G.ho.st, to use the Internet to complete many of the day-to-day tasks that ordinarily require actual face-to-face contact. More importantly, this business venture is yet another example of the good will that exists on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide.

In March 2005, I had the opportunity to travel with six Michiganders, three Palestinian-Americans and three Jewish-Americans, to Israel and the Palestinian territories to study the possibility of joint Israeli-Palestinian business ventures. During this visit, we met with entrepreneurs active in a full range of industries, from agriculture to textiles to software development to manufacturing. While these joint business ventures cannot make peace, they do help foster good will, and they demonstrate the potential for effective, economic coexistence if a final peace agreement can be reached.

More recently, during a trip to Israel to present the Senate resolution com-

memorating the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel, I learned of what I hope will be a major joint economic venture. During my meeting with President Shimon Peres, I learned about the Valley of Peace Initiative, a large-scale undertaking to construct a tourism corridor. The Valley of Peace is envisioned to stretch over the 500 kilometers along the Israeli-Jordanian border, from the Red Sea to the Yarmuk River. Under the current plan, the Valley of Peace initiative includes several projects, ranging from a water conduit connecting the Red Sea and the Dead Sea in an attempt to prevent the latter from drying up, to an Israeli-Jordanian airport near Eilat and Aqaba, to a connection of the Jordanian and Israeli railway systems and a mutual Israeli-Palestinian Authority industrial zone. While the initiative is still in the idea stage, it could offer a major opportunity for joint economic cooperation between Israelis, Palestinians, and, in this case, Jordanians.

Employment and economic growth are critical to fostering stability for Israelis and Palestinians alike. G.ho.st is another example of a promising partnership that can benefit the region in ways that surpass the positive economic impact. Should their business model prove to be a success, it would bode well for building additional partnerships and fostering further much-needed goodwill in the region.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have The New York Times article to which I referred printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the New York Times, May 29, 2008]

ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS LAUNCH WEB START-UP

(By Dina Kraft)

RAMALLAH, WEST BANK.—Nibbling doughnuts and wrestling with computer code, the workers at G.ho.st, an Internet start-up here, are holding their weekly staff meeting—with colleagues on the other side of the Israeli-Palestinian divide.

They trade ideas through a video hookup that connects the West Bank office with one in Israel in the first joint technology venture of its kind between Israelis and Palestinians.

"Start with the optimistic parts, Mustafa," Gilad Parann-Nissany, an Israeli who is vice president for research and development, jokes with a Palestinian colleague who is giving a progress report. Both conference rooms break into laughter.

The goal of G.ho.st is not as lofty as peace, although its founders and employees do hope to encourage it. Instead G.ho.st wants to give users a free, Web-based virtual computer that lets them access their desktop and files from any computer with an Internet connection. G.ho.st, pronounced "ghost," is short for Global Hosted Operating System.

"Ghosts go through walls," said Zvi Schreiber, the company's British-born Israeli chief executive, by way of explanation. A test version of the service is available now, and an official introduction is scheduled for Halloween.

The Palestinian office in Ramallah, with about 35 software developers, is responsible for most of the research and programming. A

smaller Israeli team works about 13 miles away in the central Israeli town of Modiin.

The stretch of road separating the offices is broken up by checkpoints, watch towers and a barrier made of chain-link fence and, in some areas, soaring concrete walls, built by Israel with the stated goal of preventing the entry of Palestinian suicide bombers.

Palestinian employees need permits from the Israeli army to enter Israel and attend meetings in Modiin, and Israelis are forbidden by their own government from entering Palestinian cities.

When permits cannot be arranged but meetings in person are necessary, colleagues gather at a rundown coffee shop on a desert road frequented by camels and Bedouin shepherds near Jericho, an area legally open to both sides.

Dr. Schreiber, an entrepreneur who has already built and sold two other start-ups, said he wanted to create G.ho.st after seeing the power of software running on the Web. He said he thought it was time to merge his technological and commercial ambitions with his social ones and create a business with Palestinians.

"I felt the ultimate goal was to offer every human being a computing environment which is free, and which is not tied to any physical hardware but exists on the Web," he said. The idea, he said, was to create a home for all of a user's online files and storage in the form of a virtual PC.

Instead of creating its own Web-based software, the company taps into existing services like Google Docs, Zoho and Flickr and integrates them into a single online computing system.

G.ho.st also has a philanthropic component: a foundation that aims to establish community computer centers in Ramallah and in mixed Jewish-Arab towns in Israel. The foundation is headed by Noa Rothman, the granddaughter of Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister slain in 1995.

"It's the first time I met Palestinians of my generation face to face," said Ms. Rothman, 31, of her work with G.ho.st. She said she was moved by how easily everyone got along. "It shows how on the people-to-people level you can really get things done."

Investors have put \$2.5 million into the company so far, a modest amount. Employing Palestinians means the money goes farther; salaries for Palestinian programmers are about a third of what they are in Israel.

But Dr. Schreiber, who initially teamed up with Tareq Maayah, a Palestinian businessman, to start the Ramallah office, insists this is not just another example of outsourcing.

"We are one team, employed by the same company, and everyone has shares in the company," he said.

At G.ho.st's offices in Ramallah, in a stone-faced building with black reflective glass perched on a hill in the city's business district, employees say they feel part of an intensive group effort to create something groundbreaking. Among them are top young Palestinian programmers and engineers, recruited in some cases directly from universities.

The chance to gain experience in creating a product for the international market—a first for the small Palestinian technology community—means politics take a backseat to business, said Yusef Ghandour, a project manager.

"It's good we are learning from the Israeli side now," Mr. Ghandour said. The Israelis, he said, "are open to the external world, and there is lots of venture capital investment in Israel, and now we are bringing that to Palestine."

The departure of educated young people mostly to neighboring Jordan and the Persian Gulf states is a major problem for the