

fixed income stretch through the entire month. We only drive when absolutely necessary for doctor's appointments and shopping. If we forget something at the store, then we go without until the next time. It cost \$51.00 to fill our tank in our mid-size car last time. The thought of gas reaching \$6.00 or even \$8.00 per gallon makes us wonder how we will possibly pay for it. We do not have bus service in Hayden, and being disabled are unable to walk to the nearest store which is a couple of miles away.

We plead with Congress to help us and the many that are in the same situation! Hopefully, Republicans will not sustain too great a loss in the upcoming election so they can push for a sensible domestic energy policy.

We are wondering if you support Newt Gingrich's "Drill Here. Drill Now. Pay Less." proposal? Hopefully so.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

MIKE and MARY.

This Congress has a terrible record when it comes to sensible solutions to our energy problem!

This [current] Congress has failed miserably to address the real problems we the public face and instead wasted time investigating horse racing and drugs in sports or anything else [that provides easy publicity]. Many [conservatives] are also failing miserably and voting for (the wrong) politics over principle in misguided attempts to hang on to their jobs: earmarks come to mind here as well as voting with the [majority] and for special interest groups that are against solving our energy problems using our own abundant resources. We need to get rid of these people FAST so that somebody that really represents us can get on with solving the problem!

As I see it, with all major potential sources of domestic oil now legally "off limits" to exploration; with refineries effectively prevented from increasing their capacities; with nuclear plants unable to expand and increase because they are prevented from safely storing their waste; with our monstrous quantities of coal, clean or otherwise, on the verge of being banned; with heavily-subsidized corn-based ethanol now a major reason for the world-wide food crisis, Congress needs to call a "time out" and take a good look at what they're doing to our country! It is not something that can continue or "our way of life" as we know it will end! And if it does, the party identified as making it happen will find itself at an end too! At some point, I expect to see our country experience the kind of public protests becoming common elsewhere around the world, and with elections coming up shortly, the means will be readily at hand to make whatever changes we need. I vote, and I am really looking at the candidates voting records closely this time.

FRED, *Priest River*.

I am grateful for this opportunity to explain to you how the high gas prices are affecting me. I am a 23-year-old senior in college from the Burley area. I came home this summer and got a job as a pizza deliverer, therefore the amount I make depends a lot on the price of gasoline, because as the cost of gasoline rises that is less money that is available for me to set aside for college. Since I came back to Burley in the end of April, I have seen the price of gas at the cheapest gas station in town jump from \$3.369 to \$3.959 tonight as I drove home from work. In nearly two months on the job, my fuel expenses have almost exceeded \$400.

I pay for college myself, with the assistance of some academic scholarships. I do not qualify for government aid. I did not qualify

for the recent tax rebate. And I have made a goal to earn my undergraduate degree without taking out a loan because, in this unstable economy, I do not want to have that added albatross when I go to buy a house and start my family. I am not asking for a hand-out, or a loan or even a tax cut (though, admittedly, that would be nice). I am a hard worker, and I can make it through college without incurring one cent's worth of debt if the government would make a sensible energy policy that kept prices at the pump reasonable. What I am afraid is that most members of Congress, and especially the leadership, do not understand that rising gas prices affect lower income families and individuals like I the most. Do they not see that the entire \$150 billion tax rebate will likely be used to cover the increased price of energy? The net economic benefit of the tax rebate is being pumped into our cars and burned. Fiery rhetoric about record profits in the oil industry may get some people angry, but does it really do any good? What assurance do I get that the price of gas will drop if Congress taxes the oil industry more? What's more, what assurance can you give me that the price will not increase as the oil companies pass the tax on to me? Some also suggest that we raise the miles per gallon standards on cars. That sounds good to me, but I cannot afford to buy a brand new Prius, much less a brand new anything. Some also say we should increase nuclear, hydro-electric, solar and wind power, all sentiments that I agree with. But, forgive my ignorance if I fail to see how building nuclear plants, dams, windmills or solar panels increase the oil supply. None of those options helps me at the pump. I still end up paying the high price of gas.

My feelings on how to solve the current energy crisis can be summed up with the title of Speaker Newt Gingrich nationwide petition drive: "Drill Here. Drill Now. Pay Less." which more than 800,000 Americans have signed to date. My plea, Senator CRAPO, is that you stand up for the people like me and demand we open our coasts for drilling, open the ANWR for drilling, open the Rocky Mountains for drilling. I know we can do it in an environmentally friendly way. We are the United States, the greatest, most powerful nation on earth. Nothing is impossible for us. My grandparents and great-grandparents lived through a Depression, which dwarfed the current economic crisis. I want to have faith in my country that our generation will meet this issue head on. I have heard people say we cannot drill ourselves out of the crisis. But I fail to see how doing nothing to increase domestic oil production solves the problem either. If a college student who struggled through Economics 101 understands that the bulk of this issue is a supply problem, what does that say about the lack of economic prowess on display by a majority of Congress? Perhaps an equitable solution for both sides would be to write a bill that opens the ANWR and at the same time releases half of the strategic oil reserve. That would have the immediate effect of lowering gas prices and a longer term effect of increased supply. Can both sides agree to something like that?

JARED.

AFRICA

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am very concerned that one of Africa's most gruesome and longstanding conflicts is once again falling off the radar screen of this Congress and this administration. For 22 years, northern Uganda has been caught in a war between

the Ugandan military and rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army, leading at its height to the displacement of 1.8 million people, nearly 90 percent of the region's population. Just a few years ago, an estimated 1,000 people were dying each week in squalid camps, and northern Uganda was called the world's worst neglected humanitarian crisis. The rebels for their part are reviled across the world for their horrific brutality. Over the course of the conflict, they have reportedly abducted more than 66,000 children, forcing them into sexual slavery or child soldiering.

In March of 2007, the Senate passed a resolution I introduced recognizing this crisis and calling on the administration to support the ongoing peace negotiations. These negotiations—which began in 2006 in Juba, Southern Sudan, and were mediated by the Government of Southern Sudan—brought a cessation of hostilities and offered the best opportunity in a decade to bring an end to the war. At the urging of this Congress and thousands of concerned Americans, the State Department finally appointed a senior diplomat to coordinate U.S. support for this peace process. That diplomat, Tim Shortley, played a crucial role over the last year in moving the negotiations forward. In March 2008, the parties reached an agreement that was one of the most comprehensive of its kind, including provisions for truth-telling, disarmament and demobilization, reconciliation and accountability.

Unfortunately, the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army—LRA—Joseph Kony, has refused to sign the agreement. Far more disturbing, his rebels now operating almost entirely outside Uganda and instead in the border region between Central African Republic, Congo, and Southern Sudan have resumed attacks and abducting children. They are easily exploiting the region's porous borders and ungoverned spaces a problem which, in my view, constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Yet rather than intensify efforts to engage and pressure Kony to accept the agreement, the United States and others in the international community have downscaled our efforts. Instead of mustering the tremendous resources at our disposal to press the rebels to accept a political solution, we have turned our attention elsewhere again.

As a result, there is now a haphazard military operation underway to contain the rebels by the Congolese military a force not known for its success in defeating armed groups or for respecting civilians caught in the cross-fire. Yes, the U.N. Peacekeeping Force in Congo, known by its French acronym MONUC, is supporting the Congolese military, but MONUC is already overwhelmed by its inability to fully address its primary task: controlling the persistent violence in the eastern Congo. I visited that region last summer and it is a region desperately in need of greater security. Without expanded resources and capacity focused

on this problem, a completely new offensive runs a high risk of exacerbating the region's volatility rather than addressing it. We have seen too many times in this part of the world how rash and uncoordinated "military solutions" have fueled the flames of conflict and generated new political grievances.

This is not to say that security measures aren't needed to protect civilians in the region and thereby bring permanent peace to eastern Congo and northern Uganda. They are. Until we are able to build the capacity of national and regional institutions, the LRA and other armed groups will continue to exploit the region's borders and wreak havoc throughout these four countries. We need more inter-agency collaboration to consider how we can bolster sustainable long-term civilian protection mechanisms, while in the meantime devising creative short-term strategies to help fill the gaps.

The calm brought by the Juba peace process presented an unprecedented opportunity in this conflict's history to rebuild northern Uganda's institutions, which is the surest safeguard against future violence and instability. I fear that this opportunity is being squandered. Since the cessation of hostilities was signed two years ago, nearly half of the people displaced have returned to their original homes and begun to restore their livelihoods. However, this process has increasingly been fraught with problems. The lack of access to basic services in the villages and transit sites, such as clean water, health care and education, has broken up families and hindered recovery. The lack of a capable and competent police force and judiciary has left women and girls vulnerable to sexual violence. Finally, the lack of programs to address underlying grievances and psychosocial trauma has allowed tensions to fester.

Responsibility for managing northern Uganda's transition lies first and foremost with the Government of Uganda. I realize that the government has limited capacity, but it seems there has been a distinct lack of high-level leadership. In October 2007, the Ugandan government launched a three-year \$600-million recovery plan for the war-torn region, but that plan has been mired in confusion. Its partial implementation only began 2 months ago. Moreover, there continues to be a lack of coordination between the government, donors, U.N. agencies and non-governmental organizations. I urge the Ugandan government to show leadership at the highest levels and demonstrate its willingness to fulfill the promises it made to the people of northern Uganda over the last year.

If the Ugandan government leads and takes measures to prevent corruption, the international community should back it up with the necessary financial and technical support. To signal that commitment, I call on the administration to help convene a high-level conference of Uganda donors. Such a con-

ference can coordinate an effective donor strategy to support recovery efforts and hold the Ugandan government accountable. This conference, though, must only be the beginning of reinvigorated institutional engagement by this administration and the next to bring this conflict to its conclusion, which is finally in sight after 22 years. Let us make it clear once and for all that the United States is resolved to see peace secured in northern Uganda.

Too often this Administration has leaptfrogged from one crisis to another in Africa, trying to put out fires but not addressing the underlying factors driving these conflicts. This is not a result of lack of interest or dedication from our diplomats, for I have seen first-hand their resourcefulness and hard work. But the reality is that the State Department's Africa Bureau is overwhelmed and under resourced. For places like northern Uganda or eastern Congo or the Niger Delta, we do not have the personnel or on-the-ground presence to respond comprehensively to insecurity. We in Congress must give greater attention in the coming months and years to ensuring our diplomats have the resources they need to operate in these neglected conflict areas. However, that process begins with us committing to these places, not just whenever they hit the headlines but because they are important to our collective security and to basic American principles.

U.S. OLYMPIANS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor two Vermonters who represented their country this summer in China. Everyone at one time or another has heard the Mark Twain quote, "It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog." Nothing embodies this adage to me more than the commendable determination of this year's Vermont summer Olympians. Vermonters have always stood as an example of what a good hard day's work can accomplish, and this summer in Beijing was no exception. In a world of more than 6.5 billion people, our great State of 610,000 creates world class athletes that stand out against the crowd.

Representing Vermont on the U.S. Women's Weightlifting Team was Carissa Gump, originally of Essex. Ever since her middle school gym teacher first convinced her to pursue weightlifting, her dedication has brought her success. One of only two U.S. women competing in her weight class, Carissa was able to finish an impressive fifth in her group and thirteenth overall. Showing off her Vermont bred toughness, she managed to complete every one of her lifts all while nursing an aggravating left wrist injury. From reading Carissa's online blog, anyone can also learn about her amazing and loving family. Her parents, Kathie and Marty, and her hus-

band Jason took time away from work to fly to Beijing with Carissa and give her their support. This inspiring display of heart truly embodied Vermont's Olympic spirit and I would like to join with her family and friends in commending Carissa's remarkable achievement.

On the track, the Men's 800 meters featured Norwich native Andrew Wheating. Andrew has become a regular in the national headlines ever since he finished second in the U.S. Olympic Trials and earned a ticket to represent his country in Beijing. Currently a sophomore at the University of Oregon and the only Vermonter to run a 4-minute-mile, Andrew has already established himself as one of the sport's rising young talents. The son of Betsy and Justin Wheating, Andrew not only showcased his talent to the world, he also realized a longtime family dream. Justin Wheating as a stand-out athlete in his home country of England never had a chance to represent his country in an Olympic games. However, Mr. Wheating managed to pass the torch to an exceptional son who Vermont is proud to call one of our own and Andrew's thrilling performance in these Olympic quarterfinals showed the world why. With all of the success and accolades this young man has already accumulated, there is no doubt in my mind that he has a very bright future ahead of him.

In a place historically famous for its winter athletes, these exceptional competitors just further prove it is impossible to pigeon hole our great State. For those of you who enjoy skiing Vermont in the winter, perhaps it is time to come see why we call them the "Green Mountains" next summer? The extraordinary displays of speed and power by these Vermonters on the world's largest stage perfectly showcased our diverse range of talent and I want to thank Carissa and Andrew for making their State and country proud.

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the 10 outstanding Hoosier athletes who represented the State of Indiana and all of the United States in the Games of the XXIX Olympiad in Beijing, China.

Lloy Ball, a volleyball player from Fort Wayne; David Boudia, a diver from Noblesville; Amber Campbell, a track and field athlete from Indianapolis; Lauren Cheney, a soccer player from Indianapolis; LeRoy Dixon, a track and field athlete from South Bend; Mary Beth Dunnichay, a diver from Elwood; Thomas Finchum, a diver from Indianapolis; David Neville, a track and field athlete from Merrillville; Samantha Peszek, a gymnast from Indianapolis; and Bridget Sloan, a gymnast from Pittsboro, all represented the Hoosier State as members of Team USA.

This Olympiad is the first for many of the Hoosier athletes; others have donned the colors of Team USA before. This year, Lloy Ball, a member of the