

President Bush's illegal warrantless wiretapping program and will urge him to reconsider his position once he is more familiar with the program.

I have found Admiral Blair to be very forthcoming with regard to reform. He clearly understands the importance not only of integrating the intelligence community but of developing coherent strategies that bring the intelligence community together with other departments of the U.S. Government, as well as budgets that reflect those strategies. These efforts have been central to my work in the Intelligence Committee, as I sought—through legislation and classified letters—to obtain interagency counterterrorism and other national security strategies from the Bush administration. I am confident that Admiral Blair will work to change this longstanding gap in our strategic capabilities. I am also reassured by his statement, at his confirmation hearing, that he agrees with the need to bring together the ways the U.S. Government obtains information, through the IC as well as through diplomatic reporting and other nonclandestine means. This critical priority was the subject of legislation introduced last year by Senator Hagel and myself and passed by the Intelligence Committee, and I will continue working to enact that bill.

A related issue is the need to ensure that Department of Defense intelligence activities are conducted under the policies of the DNI and under chief of mission authorities. In this regard, Admiral Blair has not indicated any new policy positions. On the other hand, he has stated that he understands the importance of “a coherent and coordinated approach to foreign governments and intelligence services” and has promised to “act quickly to put in place procedures to accomplish the directed alignment of foreign intelligence and counterintelligence agreements and to institutionalize it for the future.” This is a critical issue, and I look forward to working closely with Admiral Blair, should he be confirmed, as well as other members of the administration.

Another issue on which I expect to work with Admiral Blair, should he be confirmed, is human rights. I have, and no doubt will continue to have, disagreements with him about U.S. engagement with the Indonesian military, notwithstanding the lack of accountability for human rights abuses. While Admiral Blair has helped clarify his role when he was at Pacific Command, those substantive differences remain. Going forward, I am encouraged by his statement that the intelligence community “needs to emphasize in its relationships around the world that the United States respects and seeks to advance respect for human rights and that IC agencies do not condone behavior that violates this core American value.” I expect to work with Admiral Blair to ensure that that message is conveyed convincingly.

Finally, I have raised concerns about Admiral Blair's past conflicts of interest. He has acknowledged mistakes, including his failure to seek counsel before deciding not to recuse himself. I have asked him whether he would seek counsel in the future, including of ethics officers, and he has assured me that he would.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. 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 well over 1,200, are heartbreaking and touching. While energy prices have dropped in recent weeks, the concerns expressed remain very relevant. To respect the efforts of those who took the opportunity to share their thoughts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through an address set up specifically for this purpose 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:

I am a single, 55-year-old female. I commute Monday through Friday to Boise for work. Currently it costs me approximately one week's pay check (take home pay) per month, just to put gas in the car to make the commute. Needless, to say, by the time rent, utilities, and gas are paid, this leaves very little for anything else—including groceries. Weekends? Unless it is one trip to the grocery store, the car and I sit at home out of necessity, not by choice. Now that summer is here, I do not even have the option of walking to places in downtown Caldwell, as I cannot manage the heat. I guess I have officially become one of the working poor.

CYNDI, Caldwell.

Hi Mike, I had sent you two times about what is going on with coal to liquid and I receive no reply; what gives?

As long as we do not have the technology for hydrogen fuel cars and batteries are not good enough yet, we are still dependant on fossil fuels. Do something constructive and start pushing for coal to liquid. This is the only way, at this time to solve our energy crisis, as I mentioned before, the process is almost identical to cracking oil, clean diesel and all the other chemicals, except for gasoline.

I want an answer from you about this subject and no generic answer.

ED, Sandpoint.

Thank you for asking us Idahoans on how the gas prices are affecting our lives. I was unable to do a vacation trip to the coast, due to the high prices of gas. Instead of costing \$25 to fill my tank; it now takes about \$75 to fill it up. I now fill up every time it goes to

a half of a tank. I have to decide if I am going to put gas in my car or groceries that I need. I do not do much now, just go back and forth to work and pretty much nothing else. I cannot believe how things have gotten out of hand. Everything has gone up within the last 6 months. I have a home and do not want to risk losing [it]. I have been at my job for the past 8 years and have not gotten any type of raise in the last 4 years. My father is on a limited income, and he cannot afford to put gas in his vehicle, he just barely makes ends meet now. I take him to the grocery store and take him on his errands, when he needs to go somewhere. Thank you for taking the time to ask us how we are doing here in Idaho.

PATRICIA, Meridian.

I find it empowering that you are involving the people that are so affected by the recent hikes in energy costs, in this case, the price of fuel. I know that I share the pain of trying to keep up with every American that has to depend on gas and diesel to make it to work to survive and, due to inevitable geography, visit loved ones throughout the U.S. I must drive a full-sized truck and trailer to make a living and filling it up yesterday was \$124.40. That will last four or five days depending on mileage. My wife commutes from Caldwell to Payette, and even with a new Subaru that gets good mileage, has to fill up every five days as well as a new high price of \$650. This is very difficult. Progressing with a plan to save a little money, perhaps work on a much-needed retirement someday has taken a back burner to simply making it to work. Conservatively, we spend around \$560 a month in fuel prices. We do indeed need to find a solution, perhaps in house drilling . . . I am not sure.

With further concern, both of our fathers are 71 and 74 years old and in failing health. Both lives have been full and, as we all know, the inevitable is upon us. Rising fuel prices make it that much more difficult to see them. This is a long list of complaints which I do not like to do, but this is the voice of a country in desperate need. Thank you for this opportunity, may we work together.

HOWARD.

I want to get the attention of Congress. You people need to listen to these letters from Senator Crapo. Who are you representing? I do not believe the Constitution has “We, the special interest groups” in it. We, “The People” want to drill for oil on our own soil, use hydroelectric power, solar power, wind power, nuclear power, any power that is available to us in this country.

We the people are hurting. Do not you guys get it? We are the United States of America! We can accomplish anything. We the people are powerful, resourceful, proud of this land we call America! Remove the road blocks so this innovation can happen.

I am not the only frustrated citizen out there. Congress is supposed to represent the people of this nation. [But it seems that they are so disconnected, it is scary. I think Congress should get the same Social Security plan and insurance plan (or lack thereof) we get. Then things might change. You just do not realize how much this rise in gas and food prices are hurting Americans. I wish we the people could vote on this issue. I think you would see a different outcome. We would immediately be drilling for oil on our own soil and finding innovative ways to create our own power. We need to remove the handcuffs that government has put on companies so this innovation could begin. America has always been independent. What happened?

Even if the roadblocks were removed today, it is going to take time to get these

new energy systems up and running. Why are we not starting? Is it going to take people starving to death here in America to get congress's attention? People are having to choose between buying gas and buying food? Here in America?

Why are we depending upon getting oil from countries that hate us? That is just not an intelligent strategy.

DEBBIE.

Thank you for reaching out to gain the opinions of the people. Charles Krauthammer states his opinion beautifully in the editorial below. The only points I would add is that the world has only so much oil. If the U.S. begins drilling offshore, it will give Americans a continued false sense of confidence and for how long . . . 30 years . . . maybe. Together Americans need to come together and develop technology that is not oil based. We can do it now or we can leave it for our children. There are other ways to help relieve families of the financial difficulties the high cost of oil is creating. I encourage you to focus on them.

MARION, *Boise.*

AT \$4, EVERYBODY GETS RATIONAL
(By Charles Krauthammer)

Friday, June 6, 2008

So now we know: The price point is \$4.

At \$3 a gallon, Americans just grin and bear it, suck it up and, while complaining profusely, keep driving like crazy. At \$4, it is a world transformed. Americans become rational creatures. Mass transit ridership is at a 50-year high. Driving is down 4 percent. (Any U.S. decline is something close to a miracle.) Hybrids and compacts are flying off the lots. SUV sales are in free fall.

The wholesale flight from gas guzzlers is stunning in its swiftness, but utterly predictable. Everything has a price point. Remember that "love affair" with SUVs? Love, it seems, has its price too.

America's sudden change in car-buying habits makes suitable mockery of that absurd debate Congress put on last December on fuel efficiency standards. At stake was precisely what miles-per-gallon average would every car company's fleet have to meet by precisely what date.

It was one out-of-a-hat number (35 mpg) compounded by another (by 2020). It involved, as always, dozens of regulations, loopholes and throws at a dartboard. And we already knew from past history what the fleet average number does. When oil is cheap and everybody wants a gas guzzler, fuel efficiency standards force manufacturers to make cars that nobody wants to buy. When gas prices go through the roof, this agent of inefficiency becomes an utter redundancy.

At \$4 a gallon, the fleet composition is changing spontaneously and overnight, not over the 13 years mandated by Congress. (Even Stalin had the modesty to restrict himself to five-year plans.) Just Tuesday, GM announced that it would shutter four SUV and truck plants, add a third shift to its compact and midsize sedan plants in Ohio and Michigan, and green-light for 2010 the Chevy Volt, an electric hybrid.

Some things, like renal physiology, are difficult. Some things, like Arab-Israeli peace, are impossible. And some things are preternaturally simple. You want more fuel-efficient cars? Do not regulate. Do not mandate. Do not scold. Do not appeal to the better angels of our nature. Do one thing: Hike the cost of gas until you find the price point. Unfortunately, instead of hiking the price ourselves by means of a gasoline tax that could be instantly refunded to the American people in the form of lower payroll taxes, we let the Saudis, Venezuelans, Russians and Iranians

do the taxing for us—and pocket the money that the tax would have recycled back to the American worker.

This is insanity. For 25 years and with utter futility (starting with "The Oil-Bust Panic," the New Republic, February 1983), I have been advocating the cure: a U.S. energy tax as a way to curtail consumption and keep the money at home. On this page in May 2004 (and again in November 2005), I called for "the government—through a tax—to establish a new floor for gasoline," by fully taxing any drop in price below a certain benchmark. The point was to suppress demand and to keep the savings (from any subsequent world price drop) at home in the U.S. Treasury rather than going abroad. At the time, oil was \$41 a barrel. It is now \$123.

But instead of doing the obvious—tax the damn thing—we go through spasms of destructive alternatives, such as efficiency standards, ethanol mandates and now a crazy carbon cap-and-trade system the Senate is debating this week. These are infinitely complex mandates for inefficiency and invitations to corruption. But they have a singular virtue: They hide the cost to the American consumer.

Want to wean us off oil? Be open and honest. The British are paying \$8 a gallon for petrol. Goldman Sachs is predicting we will be paying \$6 by next year. Why have the extra \$2 (above the current \$4) go abroad? Have it go to the U.S. Treasury as a gasoline tax and be recycled back into lower payroll taxes.

Announce a schedule of gas tax hikes of 50 cents every six months for the next two years. And put a tax floor under \$4 gasoline, so that as high gas prices transform the U.S. auto fleet, change driving habits and thus hugely reduce U.S. demand—and bring down world crude oil prices—the American consumer and the American economy reap all of the benefit.

Herewith concludes my annual exercise in futility. By the time I write next year's edition, you'll be paying for gas in bullion.

I am writing in response to your request for stories about energy prices. I was surprised to see that the average family spends \$200 a month on gasoline. Our family is spending \$700 a month on gasoline, not including vacations. In a relatively rural area such as Middleton, we travel 15–20 miles for work, church and shopping, and 5–10 miles to schools and any other activities in which our children are involved. Of these five—work, church, shopping, school, and activities, we could cut down on the activities our children are involved in (and we have), but the other four are not an option.

Add to this the fact that our property taxes in Middleton were raised by a third, which we are starting to pay for this month, and it makes our budget extremely tight. So tight, in fact, that we have put our home up for sale, and I will be adding substitute teaching onto my busy schedule as a mother of six to be able to make ends meet; well, I should say some of the ends—many needs will still remain unfilled because our budget will be so tight.

My suggestions for Congress: 1) Drill for more oil in our own country, being as environmentally friendly as you can; 2) Use much more nuclear power; 3) Find out who is suppressing the technologies that will allow us to move away from dependence on gasoline in our cars.

Thank you for inviting us to share our stories and suggestions.

LORENA, *Middleton.*

I am writing [because] you want to know what is going on in the real world. Well, I am here to tell you that it is not easy to do. I

am a single mom [who] is raising a teenage son. I am fighting cancer with no insurance because it is too expensive. So it is now down to do I pay the medical bills and keep fighting the cancer or do I put gas in my car to go back and forth to work? Do I put gas in the car or do I put food on the table for me and my son? We are in a war with Iraq but yet we are still importing oil from that country and supporting them after they bombed our country. Where is the smarts in that? We have oil wells here in the U.S. that are capped off and not being used when we could support our country put our own people back to work. We have fuel in reserve for war time, [but we are in war time]. [We should] open the reserves and show them we do not need their oil and the prices would come down per barrel. They say the reason that the cost per barrel is so high is because of the danger of getting the oil out well that is because we are in a war with them.

Thanks for listening.

TRACY.

Every issue needs balance. I ask you to take this letter with all the other to the Hill to give balance to your argument to offshore oil drilling.

Two years ago our family made some changes. We traded in our 10 miles to the gallon SUV and purchased a vehicle that would get 21 mpg. We tuned up our bicycles and ride them at every opportunity, and we walk to places we would have driven years ago. We also use conservation methods and turn off lights, recycle, and encourage everyone we meet to do the same.

Mr. Crapo, this is the answer to your call to off-shore drilling. It is conservation, not more oil. It is reducing the size of trucks and cars and homes. It is limiting the use of recreational vehicles that waste millions of gallons daily. It is a new consciousness that we must ultimately learn to live with to survive with our earth and the changing dynamics of our energy use.

The call for MORE is only a stop gap. It does little to solve the problem and does everything to get you through one more election. Remember, you are riding on the coattails of the most unpopular President in our history. That alone should cause you concern.

I would be surprised if this letter makes the stack that is presented to the Senate. It does little to support your argument but does express the issue the mood of one of many of the voters in your home state.

Thank you

KIRK, *Boise.*

It is time we stopped building homes no one will buy and started building nuclear power plants, putting up windmills, and using this land these developers have gobbled up to grow corn to feed our families. Building more houses (as in Boise when 9,000 homes are up for sale due to a loss of jobs) is nonproductive in this housing market. This would also put people to work and possibly help with the illegal problem we have in Nampa. These people come here to build houses and do landscaping.

When I used to fill my truck for \$56 and it would last a month, now it is \$82. I live on Social Security Disability. Cutting food, I have already done. Cutting utility costs, I did this month. I cannot cut my meds or my insurance, but I do not go see my Dr. as often as I should.

BARBARA, *Boise.*

I really appreciate your willingness to step up and getting the information from the people about problems in our economy. This is my story—myself and my family, which includes four children ages from 12 to 5 years, and my wife. We just bought a house that

made our life a lot easier about 1 year and a half ago. This house is a lot bigger than the one we had. I needed a house that could fit all of us. So I went from a 1,146 square foot home to a 2,000 square foot home, a lot better. But ever since the prices of gas started going up, it has put us in a bind. Right now I am now about 2 months behind on my mortgage and really do not have any way of making it up. So we have the house on the market for a short sale. Since the gas prices are rising, people are not shopping like they used to, so my wife's work is affected hence her hours are cut. I work all the way in Boise and live in Nampa. I have been at my job for 9 years now, and it seems like I am just working to get back and forth.

I really think that we should start drilling other places now. The economy is going or is already taking a big hit on everything. Since the price of gas basically controls the price of everything like food and since I have four kids, my grocery bill has [gone] up, also. Another option maybe is to have the oil companies cut the Americans a stimulus check at the end of every fiscal year. They are making a huge profit. That tells me that the price can go down a lot and they can still make a little money. Instead they want to help hurt the economy. In my eyes, they are no better than terrorists.

Thanks for taking the time to read my email and hopefully since we the people actually put you guys into these positions to help the economy and keep our country, state, city safe and running like a well-oiled machine, I really hope that something can come of this. I really believe that if gas prices run around \$2.50 a gallon they can still make a profit and keep things going in our country with no problem.

JASON.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING THE WARREN COUNTY PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I congratulate the members of the Warren County Prevention Partnership, an antidrug group that represented the Commonwealth of Kentucky in the 2009 inaugural parade. I was pleased to learn that such an outstanding organization represented Kentucky on the national stage.

The Warren County Prevention Partnership holds the distinct honor of representing Kentucky in three consecutive Presidential inaugurations: 2001, 2005, and 2009. The Warren County Prevention Partnership works for a drug-free America and its "Reach for Your Dreams" antidrug and antiviolence program is motivated to help America achieve that goal.

I am proud that such a superior association represented Kentucky on such a historical day in our Nation's history, and I support the organization, as well as others that strive for a drug- and violence-free country. I hope that this recognition assists the Warren County Prevention Partnership in getting its message heard by all Americans.

Again, I congratulate the members of the Warren County Prevention Partnership on their remarkable feat of representing Kentucky in the past

three inaugurations. I hope that its accomplishments inspire others to work for a drug-free America.●

TRIBUTE TO MARLENE ELLIOTT BROWN

• Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I honor Marlene Elliott Brown, who was appointed in 2001 by former President George W. Bush as the Delaware/Maryland Director for USDA Rural Development where she oversaw housing, business, water and waste loan programs, community facilities and grant programs for my State of Delaware and neighboring Maryland.

My staff and I have had the great privilege of working with her on rural development projects including economic development, housing and the provision of critical public utilities throughout rural Delaware.

She started her remarkable career in politics in 1982 when she served as State director for my predecessor, Senator Bill Roth. While Senator Roth was known for his many accomplishments on the national level, in Delaware, he was best known for providing outstanding constituent services. No one was more responsible for building and sustaining this high level of service than Marlene. Striving to meet this standard has been one of my highest priorities as a U.S. Senator and a great challenge for my staff because Marlene set the bar so high. She truly represents the highest level of excellence in public service. More importantly, Marlene has the heart of a public servant which is a rare quality but one that is sorely needed in the world today.

First and foremost, Marlene was a proud southern Delawarean. She grew up on a family farm near Laurel, DE, graduated as valedictorian of her class at Laurel High School, and subsequently graduated from Delaware Technical and Community College and Salisbury University with a major in business administration. In addition to her public service, she has been, and remains, very active in her church and community, having served as past president of the Georgetown-Millsboro Rotary Club, former vice chairman of the Republican State Committee, a past Honorary Wing Commander at the Dover Air Force Base, a member of the Laurel Chamber of Commerce, a board member of the Delmarva Christian High School, and a member of the Delaware Tech Educational Foundation Council.

She has also received numerous awards, including Outstanding Young Women of America in 1982, Delaware Young Careerist for Delaware Business and Professional Women in 1985, and the first recipient of the William Roth Outstanding Achievement Award in 2004, just to name a few.

I have had the great pleasure of working with Marlene Elliott Brown for many years and joined her frequently to announce USDA funding for projects throughout southern Dela-

ware. Her hard work and dedication to the betterment of rural communities has helped enrich the lives of many Delawareans. Marlene's vibrant spirit is unwavering and her fervent commitment to public service reflects the desire of an individual devoted to making a difference. She is truly a generous and caring friend who has provided inspiration to many. While representing the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Delaware and Maryland, Marlene somehow found time to help train not one but two people who have served as my county directors in Sussex County. For that, I will always be grateful.

Marlene and her husband still live on a family farm near Laurel where she grew up, and I know that her family, community and our state are very proud of her accomplishments. I want to personally thank Marlene's family for their willingness to share her with all of us. Marlene is quite simply a very good person with a great heart, and I wish her well on the next stage of her noteworthy career.●

REMEMBERING AUSTIN CUNNINGHAM

• Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, Orangeburg, SC, has lost one of its finest citizens with the passing of 94-year-old Austin Cunningham. Mr. Cunningham led a most distinguished life and his contributions to the people and community will be greatly missed.

During his life, Mr. Cunningham was a soldier, businessman, community leader, writer, lawyer and citizen of the year. His hometown newspaper, the Orangeburg Times and Democrat, summed up his life—Mr. Cunningham was, "the definition of a Renaissance man."

If there was a business or civic endeavor that would improve the life of his town and community, Mr. Cunningham was involved. From putting in new street lights to tackling the war on drugs on the streets of Orangeburg, Mr. Cunningham was proof that one person could make a difference.

Mr. Cunningham played an instrumental role in helping young, underprivileged, at-risk teenagers find employment and learn the value of hard work. In 1984, he was invited to the White House to meet with President Reagan who thanked him for participating in this program.

He was also a patron of the arts who supported and encouraged the choir at South Carolina State University, one of our Nation's foremost historically Black universities. The university awarded him its Distinguished Service Award in 1995.

Orangeburg, SC, has lost a fine citizen, friend, and community leader with the passing of Austin Cunningham. His life work deserves recognition on the contributions he made to his fellow citizens.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and citizens of Orangeburg,