

proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

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:

We consider ourselves very fortunate that we can still do the things we want. However, we certainly feel the bite at the pump. We are retired (but still working) and were hoping to travel, but the cost is going to get in the way of that. We have cut out unnecessary trips, have a small, efficient car that we use now more often than our pickups and look for ways to conserve. We live in a rural area and no matter how we try to stay close to home, we still have to travel some distance to get supplies and groceries. We still need to drive our pickups and cannot always take the car. Our tractors and other machinery need fuel. Rural Americans are going to feel this more than others. We have longer distances to drive, we have more need for fuel and we do not have public transportation, etc. There is only so much cutting back we can do and still earn a living or make ends meet.

High gas prices cannot help but have a negative effect on other businesses. In an area that used to have a thriving economy based on natural resources (timber), we were told to become dependent on tourism to replace that. This is what happens when tourism is the basis of your economy—people stay home, businesses go belly up, the local economy suffers.

The solution is to begin stepping up the pace to develop our own energy and accompanying infrastructure so that we do not need to be so dependent on countries who certainly do not have our best interests at heart. We cannot afford to place our natural resources off limits and expect the world to meet our needs. It is morally wrong to exploit other countries' resources while our own are locked away.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

WAYNE and JULIE BURKHARDT,
Indian Valley.

I most likely will never meet anyone of you. I believe that you must be great, because you were voted to your place where you are seated today, by others just like me, barely keeping my head above water. I believe in this great nation, I believe that your jobs are to be the voice of the great people of this nation. We believed that you could that why we voted for you. So fight for us, our voices are lifted and we are screaming for help. There is no reason we should be here; as a young set of thirteen colonies we broke away for taxes and tyranny. Please tell me why we are at the mercy of tyranny again, and paying those very high taxes.

If we can create a nuclear bomb that kills people, we can spend a trillion dollars a year on a war that kills people and brings this country to its knees. By god we can do something other than this dependence on oil.

Let us be leaders again. Let us be a great people again.

ANNA REED, *Idaho Falls.*

First of all I thank God that I live in Idaho and for the most part my representatives represent me. Secondly, I feel that the rest of the U.S. Congress is absolutely out of touch with average American citizens. I feel that MY beautiful state of Idaho where I live with like-minded people will not be able to make its voice heard in the U.S. Congress. I could tell you how my family is being hit hard by sky-high gasoline, and energy prices, and how I have cut back on driving. I could tell that if gas prices and the cost of energy continues to rise I will be forced to take drastic measures just to keep food on the table and get to work. However, I am truly worried that the elitists in the U.S. Congress will just rub their hands together and say, our plan is working we are saving the globe from warming. Somewhere along the way the majority of our representatives in Congress have forgotten they are just that—representatives. They have taken it upon themselves to be gods thinking they have the moral high ground and who cares how the everyday average American is effected by their decisions. Yes, the United States is too dependent on petroleum for our energy and we are far too dependent on foreign sources of that petroleum. But are we willing to let the economy continue to be crushed because our Congress has bought into the fallacy of Climate Alarmism? Yes! We should be passing legislation to fully utilize proven American oil and natural gas reserves in a way that preserves the environment for future generations. That is why I strongly support policies that will take further and full advantage of nuclear energy technologies, wind and solar power, and effective renewable and alternative fuels. The Congress must take serious action that will result in reduced energy dependence of fossil fuels or provide financial relief for those hit by the recently-sky-rocketing prices. If the moral elitists in Congress don't act quickly there will not be any tax payers left to save the world. The oil companies make four cents a gallon; the government collects 18 cents a gallon—I think we should be investigating Congress.

TOBY ANDERSON.

My family has very much felt the painful effects of high oil prices as I have seven children (four of them teenagers). Even with planning our trips into town we spend an average of \$570 just on fuel, not mention the increased burden of escalated costs of all other commodities that we purchase! I am a believer in taking care of our environment and being responsible caretakers of the earth, but our government and our economy being held hostage by "save the planet" extreme leftist special interest groups has got to end!!! We need to wean off of oil as a major

source of energy but that will take time as I understand it. Therefore, as a temporary measure we need to tap into our resources. That will buy us enough time to establish new technologies such as hydrogen (which I believe is a great method of powering vehicles). The best and one of the safest methods of producing electricity is nuclear, utilizing the ability to reuse the fuel. Drilling for oil, harvesting coal, nuclear, and production of hydrogen can all be done in an environmentally sound way, freeing us from bonds of other countries that would like to kill us and the environmental wackos that believe that the world would be a perfect place without humans and they would like to see us revert back to the 1700s or go away completely! To me, energy is a national security issue that must be dealt with immediately. Please help us out of this mess that we have allowed ourselves to get in through bad government policies.

Thanks for letting me vent.

PAUL PETERSEN.

Sen Crapo, let us see, I can't drive my diesel truck and I do not use my boat, I go to work and back. I think you need to take the oil off the stock market and start drilling. What the hell is wrong with everyone in D.C.? You are making so much money off of oil you cannot take care of this.

Thanks.

DON.

In response to the story we saw on KTVB 10 p.m. last night, and again this morning, I would like to submit the following:

It is amazing how God knows what is coming and has a way of preparing us for it.

Seven years ago, before gas prices started their initial climb, I stumbled upon a deal on a '79 Honda CB650. I had not ridden a motorcycle for eleven years (same length of time it had been sitting in a warehouse). Initially, I did not think I should spend the \$800. But a few weeks later decided I could not pass up the deal. Right after I bought it, gas prices started inching upward.

Last year, my wife, who has never even expressed interest in motorcycles and even asked me what I needed one for when I bought the CB650, began asking questions about riding. And about a month later (May), she decided to go ahead and do it. We got her a little 150 scooter and signed her up for Idaho STARS, but the first opening was not until Sept 7th. So we did a lot of practice in parking lots before the course began.

My elder daughter (31 at the time) had been asking me to teach her to ride for a couple years. But I had to tell her I did not have a bike that was suitable for beginners. It was a high-revving machine that was easy to stall, besides being a rather heavy machine for her to pick up if she dropped it. So when she heard about her mom and found out they provide the bikes for the STARS course, she signed up for the same class, and so did her husband. All three were trained the same weekend.

In short, our solution for high gas prices (at least until Congress acts to provide more permanent relief) is to ride two wheels as much as the weather will allow. We prefer not to ride in the rain, and fortunately for us, summertime is very dry here in the Treasure Valley. However, we do have to face the fact that such tactics will not do us much good when fall and winter come along.

For the moment, we marvel how God prepared us well in advance, and now gas prices are \$1.00/gallon higher than last year.

Here is a sample of our present savings. Nancy's present, freeway-capable 400 scooter gets 52 mpg. She can go 135 miles on 2.6 gallons. We are presently paying \$4.289/gal for premium at Shell. Those 135 miles cost us \$11.15, or little over 8 cents a mile.

If she drives the same 135 miles in our '02 Pontiac Bonneville that gets 22 mpg, she will burn 6.1 gallons of regular unleaded at 4.099/gallon for \$25.01 (18.5 cents a mile.) So every time she fills the scooter, she saves \$14.14 in fuel cost at present prices. Savings numbers on my "bike" are slightly less, but comparable since it gets 46 mpg. My fill up for 135 miles is 2.9 gallons (same grade) for \$12.59, about half of what it costs to drive. And a little publicized fact is that motorcycles contribute a lot less to air pollution, besides being fun to ride, and easier to park.

Like a lot of other comments I have seen on the subject, I also think we should be drilling oil in ANWR as well as our own oil fields in Texas (where production numbers are managed by the Texas Railroad Commission), Oklahoma, California and off-shore to reduce our dependence on foreign oil from countries that do not have our best interests at heart.

We definitely need to build more nuclear power plants, more refineries to balance supply with demand, and proceed with coal conversion, wind energy, and solar power. I know that hydrogen powered cars only emit water, but hydrogen is so highly explosive, I think it will be a tough sell and will take decades to develop an infrastructure for those daring souls willing to participate. A scary thought is what effect the presence of such cars will have on the safety of other travelers.

Respectfully,

GENE HEIKKOLA, *Meridian*.

Today's energy prices and the rate of incline are far exceeding the rate of pay for many jobs in our area (Idaho Falls). As young adults just starting a family, it is depressing to think about the future and not know if I am going to be able to provide for my family.

If we are waiting for a rainy day to tap into our domestic oil sources, that time is now! With all of the advancement in technology hopefully our reliance on fossil fuel is going to diminish so why not use them now. Our economy needs it; if less money is spent on filling vehicles people could travel and spend money to boost the economy.

Thanks.

JARED.

Thank you for your concern and for taking action on our behalf on the high costs of energy and its effects on the average Idaho family. In your email you mention that the average Idaho family spends \$200 per month on gasoline. I feel that that is way too conservative of an estimate. My wife and I spend are now spending \$600 per month on just gasoline. I drive a Honda Accord and my wife drives a minivan, neither of which are horrible gas guzzling SUVs. This is putting a real strain on our budget and we are having to cut back in other areas to compensate for the high cost of fuel. We believe that as a nation we should become energy independent. We both support offshore drilling, drilling in the ANWR, processing oil shale in the Rocky Mountain states, nuclear energy, along with all other forms of energy production. We need to clear the way of lawsuits by declaring a national emergency, of which this is. We cannot continue to be the light of freedom to the world if we are dependent upon the countries that are trying to stomp that light out for our very existence. Thank you for concern in this matter.

FRED and KAMALA FREE, *Idaho Falls*.

The inability of our government to work together has reached a point it is killing our country. When one party tries to advance an idea the other kills it because it does not fit just right with their program. I have never seen the likes of it. I am a registered and a

dyed-in-the-wool Republican but have been having these crazy thoughts that I should vote for a Democrat for President so at least there would be a majority in Congress with a President to go along with it. Crazy thoughts but I am sick of the gridlock.

We are retired and have spent a lifetime getting ready so we could travel and see the country and enjoy these last years of our life. All of the sudden we cannot even hardly drive any longer and we find ourselves not being able to make ends meet at the end of the month. As prices keep going up we will find ourselves in trouble as our income is fixed.

We should be drilling for oil everywhere it is. Why we have blocked drilling all over the country and allowed ourselves to become hostages to OPEC, I will never be able to understand. We are a free society but oil is so critical to our well being there needs to be some oversight on this business to make sure they are refining to capacity and drilling everywhere. We should not be importing one barrel of oil. The way it is now, the oil companies hold down refining to keep the prices up.

Also we should be building nuclear power plants now for the future. Why we stopped building them I do not know....

Good luck. Please get with your Democrat partners and work something out....anything is better than nothing.

VAL MEIKLE.

Thank you for taking enough interest in the issue of high gas prices to ask Idahoans. Personally, though it is a hit on the budget and will change the amount of time our fifth wheel spends in storage rather than on the road, the high prices are more of a nuisance than a threat. For that my wife and I are blessed. The bigger issue for me and for the many other Idahoans that I talk to is that we, the little people, understand how to fix the problem and apparently our government does not or will not. We need to immediately start drilling where we know there are oil reserves (Alaska, North Dakota/Montana, off shore) and begin construction of new refineries as the drilling progresses. Also, begin the immediate construction of nuclear power plants to eliminate natural gas fired plants so that those resources can be diverted to other uses. We should begin work on oil shale research and development. Lastly, continue to encourage the development of economically feasible alternatives for our next generation of automobiles but let's not abandon what we already have. I had two ten-year-olds staying at our house last night and as we watched the 10:00 p.m. news they made comments that made it clear to me that they understood that government was the biggest obstacle to solving our current 'energy crisis' (so called). Congress needs to shed the bonds they voluntarily accepted from the environmental crowd and do what is right for our country.

DON and GAE BURTON, *Meridian*.

I own a small landscape design and build firm in Boise. The skyrocketing fuel costs are a big hit to my little company. At the prices today, I am spending nearly \$3,000 a month on fuel for four trucks and some small equipment. That is a cost to my company of \$150 per day. It is hard to pass on all the higher expenses and still be competitive in the marketplace so the net effect is a hardship to my bottom line. This year my fuel costs will be more than 50 percent of my salary.

What is our energy policy? Why do we allow other nations to drill off our coast lines only to ship the oil away from our shores and sell it back to us at high prices? When are we going to free ourselves from the

Middle East and other nations such as Venezuela whom have such a hatred of America? Showing the rest of the world that we are serious about our own energy independence will have an immediate impact on the current price we pay at the pump.

We need to develop a dual approach. We need to open up drilling in ANWR and other areas around our country. We need to work towards weaning ourselves off of foreign oil and gain American oil independence.

At the same time we need to work on alternative forms of energy and collectively, government and private industry will be able to solve this crisis.

How about a little focus on our own energy independence and let's start taking care of ourselves, stop all the back biting political posturing and come together as Americans for the good of the nation and our long term survival as the greatest nation on God's Green Earth.

Thanks for listening.

DAVE, *Boise*.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER JOSHUA M. TILLERY

Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. President, I rise today to honor a brave Oregonian who tragically lost his life last Monday in Kirkuk, Iraq. CWO Joshua M. Tillery, was a pilot with the 6th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum. Chief Warrant Officer Tillery was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq at the time of his death.

Joshua Tillery was a recipient of the Bronze Star, the Air Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal for Combat Service, the Global War on Terror Service Medal, two Army Commendation Medals, six Army Achievement Medals, the Noncommissioned Officers Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Army Overseas Service Ribbon, the Army Air Assault Badge, the Army Aviator Badge, the Combat Action Badge, and the Parachutist Badge for his courageous service to our country.

Chief Warrant Officer Tillery represents the most selfless and most honorable of men in our country. His friends and family recall how he was to serve his country and how he always wanted to do whatever he could to help people. Joshua loved to fly and was on his way to becoming a flight safety officer. Like so many Oregonians, he enjoyed outdoor activities, and particularly loved snowboarding and riding dirt bikes. He was 31 years old when he passed, a devoted husband, and father of three young boys with another baby on the way.

I offer my prayers and condolences to his family and friends. Oregon has lost one of its bravest and brightest young men, and I know I join all Oregonians in honoring the legacy of Joshua Tillery.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO SYBIL MOSES

• Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Sybil Moses, a