

I have heard that we have stores of our own oil here in the U.S. which we should take advantage of. The idea of hydrogen powered cars could also be a good solution. Nuclear power is very efficient, and it is as safe and clean as many other energy sources we are using. Whether we used nuclear power for energy in our cities, or if we used it in our transportation such as cars and airplanes, it would be a wise move. I know there are energy sources that we are not taking advantage of, but we should be. Let us fix these problems.

JORDI, *Shelley.*

I read where you are asking input from Idahoans on how the high energy costs are affecting us. To put it simply, I am going broke.

Everything has gone up. My gas bill has gone up 100 percent. Groceries have gone up 40 percent. I cannot calculate how much other prices have gone up but they have. Every month I have less and less. And unlike some people, I cannot vote myself a pay raise.

I do agree with drilling for oil now off the coast and in Alaska. People need to know that China wants to drill for oil some 60 miles off of our coasts. I hear we have enough oil to be rid of the Arabs and other hostile countries for at least 30 years. By then we can have alternatives to oil. People say it will take seven years to start drilling for oil if we lift the ban now. Well, if we don't how high will oil be in seven years? What on earth will our economy and national security will be like in seven years?

I read where Japan has a car that runs on water. On Fox News they did a story on a fellow by the name of Denny Klein (?) who invented a new process for splitting water into hydrogen and is running his car off of it. He supposedly has a contract with the Department of Defense. I asked Congress if this was so but no one will answer for me.

I do not believe that corn for fuel is the right thing to do. It takes one and a half times as much energy to produce it and it gets about one-third less in gas mileage. Now who wants that? It is like when the Mars Company made a candy bar that was smaller and cost more and said it is what the customer wants. What the heck? Also, you know corn for fuel will compete with corn for food, as will growing other crops for fuel instead of food. If the competition for food and land does not drive up the cost, the government's mandate and subsidies will.

I believe we need more nuclear power plants. There are a number of designs out there that are proven and are cheap. I believe DuPont has come up with a cheap, reliable design, or perhaps Westinghouse. Even Japan has offered the cheap design they have. However, true to our government's way of doing business, DOE will hear nothing of it. DOE is determined to reinvent the wheel. I do know that DOE has turned down outside jobs at the INL. I say get DOE out of the picture and let the private sector do what it does best. And if it is shown that our own oil companies are doing what the Arabs are doing (artificially manipulating the market) then nail them to the wall. Last year Idaho kept asking why is it that Idahoans have to pay more for gas than other states. At first the oil executives touted "supply and demand." Blah blah. Later they flat out admitted that the cost of gas in Idaho was higher because of lack of competition. They flat out said it on the news.

Also, the president has what we call an executive order. He should use it when it comes to energy. If Congress doesn't get its act together and do something (and it has done nothing for over 30 years) about our energy needs, our national security will be at stake.

So I feel that the president should just say to heck with the idiot liberals in Congress and the stupid environmentalists and use an executive order to get things going. When it is a real emergency just think what the government will do then. It may be a lot worse. Or is that the intent of some politicians (for power or money)?

DEWEY, *Idaho Falls.*

Since my kids are out of school I am not having to fill my minivan as frequently. My husband will be riding his scooter to work for as long as weather and temps permit. When we filled our Explorer last week it cost us \$85. My husband's job like many others is not completely secure and I am going to school fulltime working on my Masters and not able to work because we cannot afford day care. Things would be less of a concern for us if we were renters and not homeowners with a mortgage. This fuel and economic crisis could result in us losing our home if it continues to spiral downward. My dad's hay operation is also taking a blow due to fuel prices.

I consider myself a conservationist and think protecting the environment is important and I believe that new drilling for oil needs to be done and that it can be done in a manner that is more eco-friendly compared to the practices that were occurring when areas were declared off limits to drilling 30 to 40 years ago.

The current economic situation is not really going to allow for a lot of new projects within our own state to address concerns. Serious considerations need to be made to make transportation within the state and heavily populated areas easier. I know there are attempts being made to have Amtrak services returned to the southern part of the state. A rail transit system in the Treasure Valley has been considered a number of times but has never gone anywhere. I know if such a system existed our family would use it.

CHRISTINE, *Nampa.*

I would like to thank you for giving Idahoans this opportunity to e-mail you and let you know how we feel about high gas and energy costs and how it is affecting us. I do not know what you alone can do, but if you could persuade the other politicians to get off their pedestals and do something that really makes a difference, that would be a good thing.

The high energy costs are affecting everything. The cost of groceries is up, cost of utilities is up, everything but how much a person takes home in their paycheck is up. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure out that spells doom for the economy and for the average people in this country.

Very wealthy people really are not as affected by this as the middle class and poor are affected, Mr. Crapo. It is always at the cost of the middle class and poor that the government operates and gets its taxes. The rich are able to find loop holes and do not feel the effects like the average people do. Once again, with the cost of fuel and expenses going through the roof, it is the middle class and poor who suffer.

It is because politicians listen to lobbyists and special interest groups, allow their palms to be greased by those with special interests, such as environmentalists, that we are in the situation we are in now. Something should have been done 10 to 15 years ago to assure our stability with fuel. It was known by anybody with a brain that we were heading down this road, but instead, politicians were swayed by environmentalist money and influence to stay dependant on Middle Eastern oil as well as from other foreign countries. So now, we find ourselves in

a crisis. Politicians are elected to represent the majority, or so I thought. It seems though, that concern for those with the most money has become more important. We are now paying the price for bad decisions that have been made over the last 10 to 15 years.

It is time for action on the part of the elected officials, Mr. Crapo. We, the people, the majority—would like to see some action instead of words. We are in a crisis, we are absolutely heading for a depression, and if it is to be avoided, something other than empty words must be done.

This country has been very blessed, even the poor in our country are better off than many people who live in other countries where they have very little to nothing. Unfortunately, our government is making bad decisions and I fear that there are some really bad times in store for this country. You would think that history would teach people something, but, unfortunately human beings just seem to keep making the same mistakes over and over again, and the results do not ever change. History shows that no government or empire ever goes beyond about 200 years . . . where are we? Has our government really done anything different than any of the other governments in history? nope! Greed, power, corruption . . . all ruined every government or dictatorship that ever existed. Our government, the so called "For the People, By the People" government, is no different.

I would love to see the people take back this country again, but unfortunately so many of them live off of the government, it will not happen. Why would they bite the hand that feeds them?

Take action Mr. Crapo. Get these capped off oil wells re-opened, get ANWAR opened up and going, get offshore oil wells running, and let us start being smart and use the wind, and any other resource we have to get us off of foreign dependency on oil and energy. We are owned by those we depend on sir, I am sure you know that. We are now owned by China, the Middle East, and Venezuela because they control our money and energy. Very frightening.

Thanks for taking the time to hear what the people have to say. I hope you were able to have the time to get through this long letter.

DENISE.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

DEDICATION OF THE REMEMBRANCE PLAZA

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in commemorating the dedication of the Remembrance Plaza, a memorial to the Pinedale Assembly Center in Fresno, CA, on February 16, 2009. The Pinedale Assembly Center was a temporary internment site for nearly 5,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II. The dedication of Remembrance Plaza is a fitting tribute to a generation of Japanese Americans who stood tall in the face of adversity and injustice.

The Pinedale Assembly Center was located 8 miles north of downtown Fresno on vacant land near an existing millworkers' housing facility. From May 7 to July 23, 1942, the Pinedale Assembly Center served as a temporary holding area for nearly 5,000 Japanese Americans, most of them were from

Sacramento and El Dorado, as well as Oregon and Washington, before they were transferred to 1 of 10 internment camps throughout the Western States.

Today, the former site of the Pinedale Assembly Center is a California Registered Historical Landmark. The Remembrance Plaza, a striking 7,000 square-foot memorial that features a fountain, a concrete plaza, Japanese landscaping, an interpretive wall, and ten prominently displayed story boards, will stand tall to tell the Japanese American story of internment and redress. The Remembrance Plaza is a testament to the determination of a generation of Japanese Americans and to the value of civil liberties, justice, and equality in our democracy.

I would like to thank the Pinedale Assembly Memorial Project Committee, the Central California District Council of the Japanese American Citizens League, the Central California District Nikkei Foundation, the city of Fresno, and the many friends and supporters of this important project for their determined efforts to help make this beautiful and fitting memorial a reality.

I am keenly aware of the historical significance of the Japanese American experience during World War II and this is why I was proud to introduce legislation with my colleague, Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN, that would authorize a study that could result in the Tule Lake Segregation Center's designation as a national historic site. I am hopeful that this measure which passed the Senate in January will soon become law.

The Remembrance Plaza provides a window for future generations to see the experiences of Japanese Americans during World War II. As supporters of this most worthwhile and fitting memorial gather to commemorate its dedication, I thank them for their support and wish them a successful and enjoyable experience.●

CONGRATULATING THE FIRST GRADUATING CLASS OF THE ERICKSON SCHOOL

● Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I congratulate the first graduating class of the Erickson School at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, UMBC. In December 2008, the Erickson School awarded degrees in the Management of Aging Services to 4 bachelors and 24 masters candidates.

In just 4 years, the Erickson School has grown from a vision of its founding benefactor, John Erickson, to a fully operational professional school addressing the leadership needs in the burgeoning arena of aging services. With the graduation of its first class, the school has begun to establish a community of change agents dedicated to improving the lives of older Americans.

Our Nation faces an urgent need for qualified professionals in the public and private sectors of health care and

aging services to deal with our growing aging population. Every 8 seconds, a U.S. resident turns 60 years of age. By 2030, Americans 65 and over will increase from 12.5 percent to 20 percent of the population. Of particular significance is that the fastest growth is among those ages 85 and over. Between today and 2040, this group will increase by another 258 percent, a tribute to improvements in medicine and public health.

The job of caring for an aging population is one that cannot be outsourced. The demographic shift we are witnessing will demand the development of innovative and entrepreneurial services and products. Every aspect of our society will likely be transformed, from the workplace, to the way in which we provide health care, to the assumptions underlying fundamental Government programs.

The Erickson School's first graduates are positioned to respond to the urgent challenges and opportunities presented by the speed and scale with which the U.S. population is aging. This class includes the CEO of a Maryland retirement community, the executive directors of the Baltimore City and County departments of aging, and other experienced aging services professionals from across the Nation.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the leadership of Dean J. Kevin Eckert and congratulating the graduates. They are: Jessica Hallis, Tara McDonnell, Jena Rathell, Juliet Strachan, Eleanor Alvarez, Brenda Becker, Rebecca Bees, Mimi Burch, Richard Compton, Benjamin Cornthwaite, Seth Dudley, Christopher Emmett, Arnold Eppel, Diana Givens, Christopher Golen, Steve Gurney, William Holman, Jennifer Holz, Dorothea Johnson, Waclawa Kludziak, Susan Kraus, Jonathan May, Christine Mour, Margaret Mulcare, Elizabeth O'Connor, George Pasteur, Jr., Judith Shapiro, Chris Stewart, John Stewart, Nathaniel Sweeney, and Leonard Weiser.

The Erickson School will be a world leader in meeting the demands for new human capital, as well as policy analysis, research, and executive education. Erickson School alumni are at the leading edge, a new group of professionals that will revolutionize not only the field of aging services but also the way society views aging. They are part of a transformative force that will steer the field of aging services in new directions, and I am pleased to honor them today.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL JAMES S. BROWNE

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, on February 11, 2009, Mountain Home Air Force Base, AFB, in my home State of Idaho will bid farewell to COL James S. Browne and his wife Alison. Colonel Browne has been the Mountain Home AFB 366th Fighter Wing Commander, and Commander of the base, since September 15, 2007.

Under Colonel Browne's exemplary leadership, the Gunfighters of Mountain Home AFB have excelled in their respective missions no small feat considering that the 366th Fighter Wing consists of 24 squadrons and over 5,000 personnel—and that doesn't include family members. A base commander is a little like a mayor. Along with military mission responsibilities, a base commander is ultimately held accountable for community well-being, infrastructure and services, and serves as the liaison with local, regional and State civilian government officials. Military families tend to move more often than the civilian population. As such, base services are critical both when families first arrive, and the military member is adjusting to a new job, and throughout their time as they make new friends and carve out a niche in what they know will be a long-term temporary living situation. Furthermore, when deployments occur, it is the responsibility of base leadership to make sure that families are taken care of in their loved ones' absence. Colonel and Mrs. Browne worked in their own capacities to help ensure that facilities, services and community outreach efforts came together to make these life transitions easier. In fact, during his time at Mountain Home AFB, Colonel Browne oversaw the completion of 318 new base housing units.

When it came to the mission of the wing, Colonel Browne excelled in promoting and achieving excellence, turning challenge into success along the way. As a testament to his remarkable leadership capabilities, in March of 2008, the wing achieved the first passing grade for a combined phase I and II operational readiness inspection in 3 years in all of Air Combat Command. That success at the base translated into success in the global war on terror. Colonel Browne oversaw numerous worldwide Air Expeditionary Force deployments of the 72 F-15 aircraft operating from the base. During his tenure, over 5,200 people and over 1,500 tons of cargo were deployed to 18 locations worldwide. Colonel Browne's gunfighters demonstrated skill and precision in their outstanding contributions to Operation Enduring Freedom. In October of 2008, the 391st Fighter Squadron deployed to Afghanistan, flying over 1,700 combat sorties for an incredible 98 percent hit rate in support of coalition forces. Colonel Browne also oversaw the successful implementation of a strategic training partnership program with the Republic of Singapore Air Force.

Colonel Browne's leadership tenure has been characterized by optimism, a firm commitment to the gravity of the mission and a dedication to the notion of team dynamics. He maintained a comprehensive view of the wing's mission within the context of the broader mission of the Air Force and the U.S. Military. His goal-oriented, vision-