

business; we want support for the middle class. The rich need no help; let them earn a living for a change.

MIKE, *Moscow.*

I am glad to see someone taking a stand that actually has a chance to be heard. I am glad that we are going to try and get some relief to the gas prices, but I think we should also be looking into the contributing factors that are causing such a demand for fuel.

I live in Meridian and must commute to Boise every day for my job. I confronted my employer (a local utility company) regarding other options to having to commute to Boise every day when the air quality was getting so bad like 4-day work week, telecommuting, etc. and was told it was not an option. My son is 5 years old and has asthma. Every time the air quality gets bad, so does his health. Recently, with the gigantic increase in fuel prices and the demand of fuel, I confronted my employer again about other options that could not only help with the air quality, but help contribute to decreasing the demand of fuel; again, I was again turned down. To me it seems that not only should we be going after congress to help relieve the outrageous cost of fuel, but we also need someone to tell employers to do what they can to start helping with the problem instead of contributing to it. Thank you for what you are doing and I hope a resolution is on the horizon.

NICHOLE, *Meridian.*

I received your email asking us to share our stories about high energy costs so here goes. We live 5 miles from the nearest grocery store and town. This means that every time we get in the car, the round trip is a minimum of 10 miles. If my husband and I both go into town a couple of times a day, and only go to the nearest town, we drive a minimum of 40 miles a day and that is without running errands, going to another town or anything like that. When all is said and done, it is much more like 60 miles a day. We also live in snow country and must have 4-wheel drives so get about 15 mpg which means at \$4 per gallon, we spend about \$16 just to get to town and back which is almost \$500 per month. It is insane.

What is more insane is the idea that we can explore and produce our way out of this mess. The US consumes about 26% of the world's oil but only has about 2% of the world's oil reserves. We would have to increase our reserves and production 12 fold to cover today's demand and that is never going to happen. The price of oil shot up when it became clear we were going to invade Iraq—financial markets hate uncertainty and invading another country is a big uncertainty. As the war has dragged on and as our President has talked about taking action against Iran, oil prices have soared higher. The best thing our nation could do to lower the price of oil would be to get out of a country we had no business invading in the first place and start spending more, much much more, on the plentiful wind, solar and geothermal we have been blessed with.

Americans want this, the people of Idaho want this, I only hope Senator Crapo is listening. I ask him to do the only sane thing and think outside the oil box.

LESLIE.

I live with a husband who makes his money his. When I had a job, I had an income and contributed to the groceries. It has already been hard for me because I had been on medical leave for over a year from a job I had for over six years that paid a little over \$11 an hour. During this time on medical leave, I could not draw any income because of some "catch 22" about if my doctor re-

leased me to go back to work with limitations, and my job did not allow me to come back to work, I did not apply for short-term disability or assistance is what I was told. After my leave was exhausted and my employer said they did not have a job for my physical limitations, I was let go, and had to pay more money for COBRA. Last fall I had enrolled in BSU with student loans that barely cover school fees, books, and travel expenses as it is, from Mountain Home to Boise and the Air Base. I was doing very well for the first semester, but money was very tight then. I ended up using my savings, my tax refund, and my retirement from the company that let me go, just to pay the bills. I found out that I have a rheumatoid arthritis, osteo arthritis, spondylitis, depression, I take lots of medications and I have had back surgery, neck surgery and I am in pain most of the time. I am still waiting for my disability hearing because it takes so long to get it scheduled and I am down to maxed out credit cards and \$150 dollars in the bank. My husband wants me to leave him because my medical bills are too expensive. I have two classes this second twelve weeks at the Air Base in Mountain Home that will end on June 30th. I do not know if I will continue with my BSU degree because I cannot afford to drive to Boise anymore. And if I do not get an income I may end up on the street. I cannot pay back my credit cards that I used to pay for living expenses and medical bills and prescriptions. They are maxed out. I am going to have to sell my things to get by.

To the Congressmen and Senators of this great country: Why are we so hesitant to get on the ball and do something about this crisis that filters down to more than gas? We cannot afford to live on what we have got and now we have to pay more?

While I am frustrated with my present circumstances, I know God will take care of me. What I am really worried about is this country and our leaders taking us down the path of destruction. Our country needs leaders who will demonstrate true authority, not bickering about what party did what or who is better for our country. We need to put parties aside, put aside differences, fall on our knees and ask God Almighty to forgive this country its many sins and his forgiveness and guidance.

[Please do your best to] to solve this crisis. I think we should drill for oil, build refineries, make alternatives available to the poor working public, use cooking oil instead of gasoline, use sugar cane like they do in South America, use wind power in windy places like Mountain Home, use geothermal resources, solar power, anything that is greener and healthier. [But please do it now and do not leave the rest of us for fend for ourselves in this terrible economy!] We are tired of the blame game. Someone do something and stop filibustering and stalling progress. [Such efforts stop our country from solving the problems we face.]

I know I went off on this a little long, but again, I am totally frustrated with inactivity and red tape. Thank you for all you do, but please remember the people who you work for whether they voted you in or not.

CRYSTAL, *Mountain Home.*

Something needs to be done. Prices keep going up everywhere. Not only is it affecting how much I spend in gas, but my grocery bill is outrageous now; Also, Idaho Power has just raised their rates. I have three children, which includes a baby in diapers. It is getting to the point where we can barely afford anything. It is really scary for us. We never have had much money, and one of the things I use to do with the kids was to go on "drives" just to get out of the house. We would go to Chevron and get drinks, then

drive to different areas in Boise that we had not seen before and listen to music. Now, we cannot even do that. Prices will keep going up because they can, and people like us are going to really "pay" for it in the long run. It makes me sick. It is not like we are not trying to make it in life. I am a student at Boise State and I will be a Respiratory Therapist. We are not people looking for hand-outs. We are a family not only trying to get by, but we want to live, too. We want to enjoy life also. It upsets me when even the little things that we were able to do are now a luxury. Something has got to be done. The reality is that there is really people who cannot afford the rise in prices (for gas and everything else). There has got to be some sort of stopping point. The saying, "The rich will get richer and the poor will get poorer" sounds more like the truth to me every day. Hopefully, you can represent the families and the people who are being affected by this.

S.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### CENTRAL MISSOURI EAGLES YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today I recognize the Central Missouri Eagles Youth Hockey Association for their outstanding public service to the community. Also, the Eagles have been presented with the "Honoring the Game Award," presented annually by the Positive Coaching Alliance at Stanford University in 2006.

The "Honoring the Game Award" recognizes three youth sports programs that "strive to win, but also strive to help their players develop skills that will serve them throughout their lifetimes." The Eagles were the only Midwestern sports program and the only youth hockey program in the Nation to be honored.

The Eagles received the "Honoring the Game Award" in recognition for their service to the community. Each year Eagles teams commit to a local service project. These projects make a meaningful difference in mid-Missouri, and they teach the Eagles players valuable citizenship lessons about volunteering.

The Hockey's program's credo "Building Good Athletes and Great Citizens" rings true and is the foundation for this program's athletes who not only show good sportsmanship but are active every year in community service. The best way for our young people to ensure a stronger America is to be active in their communities.

The Central Missouri Eagles Youth Hockey Associations' achievements represent a great deal of dedication. I trust that they will continue the high standards of principle and perseverance that brought them this honor. I hope the Eagles continue to comprise success both on and off the rink. Again, I extend my congratulations to this exceptional association and the young people within it.●

## REMEMBERING GREG HERNANDEZ

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of a dedicated public servant, SGT Greg Hernandez of the Tulare County Sheriff's Department. Sergeant Hernandez's life was tragically cut short on February 6, 2009, as a result of injuries from a vehicle accident that occurred while he was on duty.

Sergeant Hernandez dutifully served the citizens and communities for 24 years as a valued member of the Tulare County Sheriff's Department. Sergeant Hernandez demonstrated a passion for law enforcement and commitment to helping others, qualities that earned him the respect of his colleagues at the Tulare County Sheriff's Department. Sergeant Hernandez shall always be remembered for his devotion to serving the public and his friendly nature.

Sergeant Hernandez is survived by his mother Rosa Hernandez of Farmersville and his daughter Kristina Marie Hernandez of Porterville. When he was not spending time with his family and friends, Sergeant Hernandez was a devoted sportsman who enjoyed fishing, softball, and golf.

Sergeant Hernandez served the county of Tulare with honor and distinction, and fulfilled his oath as an officer of the law. His selfless contributions and dedication to law enforcement are greatly appreciated and will serve as an example of his legacy.

We shall always be grateful for Sergeant Hernandez's service and the sacrifices he made while serving and protecting the people of Tulare County. •

## TRIBUTE TO SUSAN AXELROD

• Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge and honor the work of Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy, CURE, and its founder, Susan Axelrod. I have known Susan personally for many years and can attest to her tireless work on behalf of her daughter, Lauren, and of other children and families affected by epilepsy. Epilepsy often begins in childhood and even in its mildest forms can modify brain development, with lifelong effects on cognition ranging from learning disabilities to severe developmental disabilities. In 1998, a small group of families whose children were suffering from epilepsy joined in recognizing the need for an increased commitment to research. Together, they formed the nonprofit, volunteer-based CURE. Led by Susan, they have become tireless advocates for epilepsy awareness and have grown into one of the foremost organizations in funding cutting-edge epilepsy research. To date, CURE has raised over \$9 million in its crusade toward eliminating seizures, reducing the side effects of currently available treatments, and ultimately toward finding a cure for epilepsy. I commend CURE for its unrelenting commitment to this worthy cause but underscore the fact that they

cannot work alone. Epilepsy affects over 3 million patients nationwide, and the need for adequate funding for research on a Federal level is imperative if a cure is to be found. At a time when the Nation is confronted with serious health challenges like epilepsy, we must not diminish our commitment to medical research.

Please join me in honoring Susan Axelrod and CURE for their years of vision, leadership, and commitment.

I would ask to have the following Parade Magazine article highlighting the work of Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy printed in the RECORD. The material follows:

[From Parade Magazine, Feb. 15, 2009]

## I MUST SAVE MY CHILD

(By Melissa Fay Greene)

When Susan Axelrod tells the story of her daughter, she begins like most parents of children with epilepsy: The baby was adorable, healthy, perfect. Lauren arrived in June 1981, a treasured first-born. Susan Landau had married David Axelrod in 1979, and they lived in Chicago, where Susan pursued an MBA at the University of Chicago and David worked as a political reporter for the Chicago Tribune. (He later would become chief strategist for Barack Obama's Presidential campaign and now is a senior White House adviser.) They were busy and happy. Susan attended classes while her mother babysat. Then, when Lauren was 7 months old, their lives changed overnight.

"She had a cold," Susan tells me as we huddle in the warmth of a coffee shop in Washington, D.C., on a day of sleet and rain. Susan is 55, fine-boned, lovely, and fit. She has light-blue eyes, a runner's tan, and a casual fall of silver and ash-blond hair. When her voice trembles or tears threaten, she lifts her chin and pushes on. "The baby was so congested, it was impossible for her to sleep. Our pediatrician said to give her one-quarter of an adult dose of a cold medication, and it knocked her out immediately. I didn't hear from Lauren the rest of the night. In the morning, I found her gray and limp in her crib. I thought she was dead."

"In shock, I picked her up, and she went into a seizure—arms extended, eyes rolling back in her head. I realized she'd most likely been having seizures all night long. I phoned my mother and cried, 'This is normal, right? Babies do this?' She said, 'No, they don't.'"

The Axelrods raced Lauren to the hospital. They stayed for a month, entering a parallel universe of sleeplessness and despair under fluorescent lights. No medicine relieved the baby. She interacted with her parents one moment, bright-eyed and friendly, only to be grabbed away from them the next, shaken by inner storms, starting and stiffening, hands clenched and eyes rolling. Unable to stop Lauren's seizures, doctors sent the family home.

The Axelrods didn't know anything about epilepsy. They didn't know that seizures were the body's manifestation of abnormal electrical activity in the brain or that the excessive neuronal activity could cause brain damage. They didn't know that two-thirds of those diagnosed with epilepsy had seizures defined as "idiopathic," of unexplained origin, as would be the case with Lauren. They didn't know that a person could, on rare occasions, die from a seizure. They didn't know that, for about half of sufferers, no drugs could halt the seizures or that, if they did, the side effects were often brutal. This mysterious disorder attacked 50 million people worldwide yet attracted little public attention or research funding. No one

spoke to the Axelrods of the remotest chance of a cure.

At home, life shakily returned to a new normal, interrupted by Lauren's convulsions and hospitalizations. Exhausted, Susan fought on toward her MBA; David became a political consultant. Money was tight and medical bills stacked up, but the Axelrods had hope. Wouldn't the doctors find the right drugs or procedures? "We thought maybe it was a passing thing," David says. "We didn't realize that this would define her whole life, that she would have thousands of these afterward, that they would eat away at her brain."

"I had a class one night, I was late, there was an important test," Susan recalls. "I'd been sitting by Lauren at the hospital. When she fell asleep, I left to run to class. I got as far as the double doors into the parking lot when it hit me: 'What are you doing?'" She returned to her baby's bedside. From then on, though she would continue to build her family (the Axelrods also have two sons) and support her husband's career, Susan's chief role in life would be to keep Lauren alive and functioning.

The little girl was at risk of falling, of drowning in the bathtub, of dying of a seizure. Despite dozens of drug trials, special diets, and experimental therapies, Lauren suffered as many as 25 seizures a day. In between each, she would cry, "Mommy, make it stop!"

While some of Lauren's cognitive skills were nearly on target, she lagged in abstract thinking and interpersonal skills. Her childhood was nearly friendless. The drugs Lauren took made her by turns hyperactive, listless, irritable, dazed, even physically aggressive. "We hardly knew who she was," Susan says. When she acted out in public, the family felt the judgment of onlookers. "Sometimes," Susan says, "I wished I could put a sign on her back that said: 'Epilepsy. Heavily Medicated.'"

At 17, Lauren underwent what her mother describes as "a horrific surgical procedure." Holes were drilled in her skull, electrodes implanted, and seizures provoked in an attempt to isolate their location in the brain. It was a failure. "We brought home a 17-year-old girl who had been shaved and scalped, drilled, put on steroids, and given two black eyes," Susan says quietly. "We put her through hell without result. I wept for 24 hours."

The failure of surgery proved another turning point for Susan. "Finally, I thought, 'Well, I can cry forever, or I can try to make a change.'"

Susan began to meet other parents living through similar hells. They agreed that no federal agency or private foundation was acting with the sense of urgency they felt, leaving 3 million American families to suffer in near-silence. In 1998, Susan and a few other mothers founded a nonprofit organization to increase public awareness of the realities of epilepsy and to raise money for research. They named it after the one thing no one offered them: CURE—Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy.

"Epilepsy is not benign and far too often is not treatable," Susan says. "We wanted the public to be aware of the death and destruction. We wanted the brightest minds to engage with the search for a cure."

Then-First Lady Hillary Clinton signed on to help; so did other politicians and celebrities. Later, veterans back from Iraq with seizures caused by traumatic brain injuries demanded answers, too. In its first decade, CURE raised \$9 million, funded about 75 research projects, and inspired a change in the scientific dialogue about epilepsy.

"CURE evolved from a small group of concerned parents into a major force in our research and clinical communities," says Dr.