

eating out, vacations, purchasing household goods and home improvements. While it is easy to blame the oil companies, I do not feel that is fair. I believe a combination of environmentalists, the media and [the] global warming myth are more to blame. 31,000 scientists have gone on the record to debunk the global warming myth yet it is still very much alive in the media and being crammed into grade school children's minds. The EPA has forced oil companies to produce something like 19 different grades of unleaded gas. This is ludicrous.

There is no significant manmade global warming. There has not been any in the past, there is none now and there is no reason to fear any in the future. The climate of Earth is changing. It has always changed. But mankind's activities have not overwhelmed or significantly modified the natural forces. I believe there is a direct connection between global warming and four dollar a gallon gas. Ethanol is not the answer—it is just screwing up our food supply chain.

ANTHONY, *Sandpoint*.

Energy costs have resulted in our doing without or not going to some of the places we use to frequent. My wife and I are on Social Security and therefore have a set income. We are just not able to buy food and buy fuel for our vehicles. We are hoping Congress will do the common sense thing and "drill here, drill now and pay less". They simply must stop catering to the environmentalists and do what is right for America. As a senior member of the United States Senate, we are asking you to not only do the things you say you are going to do for the people of Idaho but be a leader and get the Senate back to Conservatism.

JERRY and TEDDI, *Homedale*.

I was born and raised in Idaho and I live here still. It is amazing how this state has changed in just the last 10 years.

The cost of fuel is insane. Raising the prices is not going to replenish the world's natural resources. We need to utilize the wind that blows nearly constantly through our state, we need to open more ethanol plants in Idaho and ship that fuel within Idaho. We need to give tax breaks to people who add solar power to their homes/businesses. All government buildings need to be solar powered.

The only way people are going to slow the destruction of our planet is by changing to using hydro power, wind power, solar power.

My family has resorted to sharing hot water to bathe and not using the air conditioning unless absolutely necessary. We have begun to ride bicycles to the grocery store to pick up milk and bread because the fuel is too precious for a small trip for the ever-necessary milk.

Idaho needs more 5 lane roads to get across the Treasure Valley. Idaho needs better public transit. Idaho needs a passenger train with stops from Caldwell, to Nampa, Kuna, Star, Eagle, Meridian, Boise * * * and numerous stops in each of those towns. Imagine with me for a moment * * * a train system with branches and stops criss-crossing the Treasure Valley, and then public buses with routes that cover the areas that the train cannot go. You, Senator, could take the train to a bus stop and catch a bus to the Statehouse! Just think about the jobs that the buses would create, and the trains * * * the traffic would be lighter on the interstate.

Treasure Valley also needs a belt route that take big trucks out of the way. A route that starts south of Eiseeman Rd and travels west but stays south of Kuna and then heads north to reconnect with I84 west of Caldwell. That would make I84 through Ada and Canyon county safer to travel and again reducing tons of congestion and traffic.

These are dreams that only you and your fellow elected officials can make a reality! We voted for you so that you will hear the voice of the people and do what we ask. You are there working for the people that voted for you. Make a difference. Make Idaho a self-sufficient, self-reliant state.

S.L.

I am an independent small business owner. Since my profit margins are tiny the high price of gas and diesel are causing me to consider closing my business.

Drill here, drill now, build refineries now. Build nuclear power plants now.

VAL, *Council*.

I think it is about time that Americans became aware of their energy usage and excessive waste of a limited resource. We should have been paying high fuel prices for many years with a tax being used for research and support of alternative technologies. Enhanced domestic production and expanded refinery capacity is not the answer to a long term problem.

BILL, *Hailey*.

Please do not vote in favor of lifting the offshore drilling ban nor in favor of drilling in any wildlife refuge. Supply is not the problem in this price run-up. New drilling will only benefit those in a position to profit from the further exclusive use of petroleum, not the average consumer.

We cannot undevelop wildlife areas, and it is impossible to unspill oil. I grew up on the California coast, where offshore drilling was underway. Certain beaches were continually contaminated. We had to use, ironically, gasoline to get the oil off our feet at the end of the day.

Again, please do not vote in favor of further drilling. Please do encourage development of alternatives to petroleum. Thank you.

NANCY, *Boise*.

What I cannot understand is why our government is so blind to how the price of fuel is affecting all of America. And still the big oil companies are making huge profits, actually obscene profits. I know their stockholders want to make a profit—but at the expense of the entire economy?

Can you name one thing that you get that does not come by truck? The airlines are dropping like flies. The average driver can hardly afford to drive to work and essential places, let alone extra driving. Cannot you see how this is a huge hurt to the American family?

KATHIE, *Melba*.

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009—PM 9

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975 as modified by the order of April 11, 1986; to the Committees on the Budget; and Appropriations:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Throughout America's history, there have been some years that appeared to roll into the next without much notice or fanfare. Budgets are proposed that offer some new programs or eliminate an initiative, but by and large continuity reigns.

Then there are the years that come along once in a generation, when we look at where the country has been and recognize that we need a break from a troubled past, that the problems we face demand that we begin charting a new path. This is one of those years.

We start 2009 in the midst of a crisis unlike any we have seen in our lifetimes. Our economy is in a deep recession that threatens to be deeper and longer than any since the Great Depression. More than three and a half million jobs were lost over the past 13 months, more jobs than at any time since World War II. In addition, another 8.8 million Americans who want and need full-time work have had to settle for part-time jobs. Manufacturing employment has hit a 60-year low. Our capital markets are virtually frozen, making it difficult for businesses to grow and for families to borrow money to afford a home, car, or college education for their kids. Many families cannot pay their bills or their mortgage payments. Trillions of dollars of wealth have been wiped out, leaving many workers with little or nothing as they approach retirement. And millions of Americans are unsure about the future—if their job will be there tomorrow, if their children will be able to go to college, and if their grandchildren will be able to realize the full promise of America.

This crisis is neither the result of a normal turn of the business cycle nor an accident of history. We arrived at this point as a result of an era of profound irresponsibility that engulfed both private and public institutions from some of our largest companies' executive suites to the seats of power in Washington, D.C. For decades, too many on Wall Street threw caution to the wind, chased profits with blind optimism and little regard for serious risks—and with even less regard for the public good. Lenders made loans without concern for whether borrowers could repay them. Inadequately informed of the risks and overwhelmed by fine print, many borrowers took on debt they could not really afford. And those in authority turned a blind eye to this risk-taking; they forgot that markets work best when there is transparency and accountability and when the rules of the road are both fair and vigorously enforced. For years, a lack of transparency created a situation in which serious economic dangers were visible to all too few.

This irresponsibility precipitated the interlocking housing and financial crises that triggered this recession. But the roots of the problems we face run deeper. Government has failed to fully confront the deep, systemic problems that year after year have only become a larger and larger drag on our economy. From the rising costs of health care to the state of our schools, from the need to revolutionize how we power our economy to our crumbling infrastructure, policymakers in Washington

have chosen temporary fixes over lasting solutions.

The time has come to usher in a new era—a new era of responsibility in which we act not only to save and create new jobs, but also to lay a new foundation of growth upon which we can renew the promise of America.

This Budget is a first step in that journey. It lays out for the American people the extent of the crisis we inherited, the steps we will take to jumpstart our economy to create new jobs, and our plans to transform our economy for the 21st Century to give our children and grandchildren the fruits of many years of economic growth.

It is true that we cannot depend on government alone to create jobs or to generate long-term growth. Ours is a market economy, and the Nation depends on the energy and initiative of private institutions and individuals. But at this particular moment, government must lead the way in providing the short-term boost necessary to lift us from a recession this severe and lay the foundation for future prosperity. That's why immediately upon taking office, my Administration worked with the Congress to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This plan's provisions will put money in the pockets of the American people, save or create at least three and a half million jobs, and help to revive our economy.

This moment is one of great paradox and promise: while there are millions of Americans trying to find work, there is also so much work to be done. That's why the Recovery Act and our Budget will make long overdue investments in priorities—like clean energy, education, health care, and a new infrastructure—that are necessary to keep us strong and competitive in the 21st Century.

To finally spark the creation of a clean energy economy, we will make the investments in the next three years to double our Nation's renewable energy capacity. We will modernize Federal buildings and improve the energy efficiency of millions of American homes, saving consumers and taxpayers billions on our energy bills. In the process, we will put Americans to work in new jobs that pay well—jobs installing solar panels and wind turbines; constructing energy efficient buildings; manufacturing fuel efficient vehicles; and developing the new energy technologies that will lead to even more jobs and more savings, putting us on the path toward energy independence for our Nation and a cleaner, safer planet in the process.

To improve the quality of our health care while lowering its cost, we will make the immediate investments needed to computerize all of America's medical records within five years while protecting the privacy of patients. This is a necessary step to reducing waste, eliminating red tape, and avoiding the need to repeat expensive medical tests.

We also will fundamentally reform our health care system, delivering quality care to more Americans while reducing costs for us all. This will make our businesses more competitive and ease a significant and growing burden middle-class families are bearing.

To give our children a fair shot to thrive in a global, information-age economy, we will equip thousands of schools, community colleges, and universities with 21st Century classrooms, labs, and libraries. We'll provide new technology and new training for teachers so that students in Chicago and Boston can compete with kids in Beijing for the high-tech, high-wage jobs of the future. We will invest in innovation, and open the doors of college to millions of students. We will pursue new reforms—lifting standards in our schools and recruiting, training, and rewarding a new generation of teachers. And in an era of skyrocketing college tuitions, we will make sure that the doors of college remain open to children from all walks of life.

To create a platform for our entrepreneurs and workers to build an economy that can lead this future, we will begin to rebuild America for the demands of the 21st Century. We will repair crumbling roads, bridges, and schools as well as expand broadband lines across America, so that a small business in a rural town can connect and compete with its counterparts anywhere in the world. And we will invest in the science, research, and technology that will lead to new medical breakthroughs, new discoveries, and entire new industries.

Regaining our economic strength also is critical to our national security. It is a major source of our global leadership, and we must not let it waver. That's why this Budget makes critical investments in rebuilding our military, securing our homeland, and expanding our diplomatic efforts because to provide for the security of the United States we need to use all elements of our power. Moreover, to honor the service of those who have worn our military's uniform, we will make the investments necessary to take care of our veterans.

For these initiatives to lay a foundation for long-term economic growth, it's important that we not only change what Washington invests in, but how Washington does business. We must usher in a new era of responsibility in which we empower citizens with the information they need to hold their elected representatives accountable for the decisions they make. We need to put tired ideologies aside, and ask not whether our Government is too big or too small, or whether it is the problem or the solution, but whether it is working for the American people. Where it does not, we will stop spending taxpayer dollars; where it has proven to be effective, we will invest. This is the approach, for example, we have begun in allocating funds to education, health care, and national security. And as we

continue the budgetary process, we will identify more cuts and reallocations for the full Budget presented this spring, and undertake efforts to reform how the programs you fund are managed so that overruns are avoided, waste is cut, and you get the most effective and efficient Government possible.

In the little more than a month my Administration has had in office, we have not had the time to fully execute all the budget reforms that are needed, and to which I am fully committed. Those will come in the months ahead, and next year's budget process will look much different.

But this Budget does begin the hard work of bringing new levels of honesty and fairness to your Government. It looks ahead a full 10 years, making good-faith estimates about what costs we would incur; and it accounts for items that under the old rules could have been left out, making it appear that we had billions more to spend than we really do. The Budget also begins to restore a basic sense of fairness to the tax code, eliminating incentives for companies that ship jobs overseas and giving a generous package of tax cuts to 95 percent of working families.

Finally, while we have inherited record budget deficits and needed to pass a massive recovery and reinvestment plan to try to jump-start our economy out of recession, we cannot lose sight of the long-run challenges that our country faces and that threaten our economic health—specifically, the trillions of dollars of debt that we inherited, the rising costs of health care, and the growing obligations of Social Security. Therefore, while our Budget will run deficits, we must begin the process of making the tough choices necessary to restore fiscal discipline, cut the deficit in half by the end of my first term in office, and put our Nation on sound fiscal footing.

Some may look at what faces our Nation and believe that America's greatest days are behind it. They are wrong.

Our problems are rooted in past mistakes, not our capacity for future greatness. We should never forget that our workers are more innovative and industrious than any on earth. Our universities are still the envy of the world. We are still home to the most brilliant minds, the most creative entrepreneurs, and the most advanced technology and innovation that history has ever known. And we are still the Nation that has overcome great fears and improbable odds. It will take time, but we can bring change to America. We can rebuild that lost trust and confidence. We can restore opportunity and prosperity. And we can bring about a new sense of responsibility among Americans from every walk of life and from every corner of the country.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 26, 2009.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to section 2(a) of the National Cultural Center Act (20 U.S.C. 76h(a)), amended by Public Law 107-117, and the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Speaker appoints the following members of the House of Representatives to the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts: Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Ms. DeLAURO of Connecticut, Mr. BLUNT of Missouri.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 2:58 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Zapata, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 234. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2105 East Cook Street in Springfield, Illinois, as the "Colonel John H. Wilson, Jr. Post Office Building".

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 478. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to ensure the right of employees to a secret-ballot election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board.

S. 482. A bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.

H.R. 1105. An act making omnibus appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on February 26, 2009, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 234. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2105 East Cook Street in Springfield, Illinois, as the "Colonel John H. Wilson, Jr. Post Office Building".

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

David W. Ogden, of Virginia, to be Deputy Attorney General.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first

and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 485. A bill to reauthorize the Select Agent Program by amending the Public Health Service Act and the Agriculture Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002 and to improve oversight of high containment laboratories; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURRIS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. INOUE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KERRY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 486. A bill to achieve access to comprehensive primary health care services for all Americans and to reform the organization of primary care delivery through an expansion of the Community Health Center and National Health Service Corps programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. REID):

S. 487. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for human embryonic stem cell research; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BROWN:

S. 488. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require group and individual health insurance coverage and group health plans to provide coverage for individuals participating in approved cancer clinical trials; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 489. A bill to amend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to authorize hunting under certain circumstances; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. HUTCHISON:

S. 490. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the windfall elimination provision and protect the retirement of public servants; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WEBB (for himself, Mr. BURR, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. WARNER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. DODD, Mr. BUNNING, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 491. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Federal civilian and military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pretax basis and to allow a deduction for TRICARE supplemental premiums; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mr. THUNE):

S. 492. A bill to amend the Social Security Act and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain employment as a member of a local governing board, commission, or committee from social security tax coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. DODD, Mr. BURR, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. 493. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the establishment of ABLE accounts for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CHAMBLISS:

S. 494. A bill for the relief of Salah Naji Sujaa; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. SPECTER):

S. 495. A bill to increase public confidence in the justice system and address any unwarranted racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal process; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. CASEY):

S. 496. A bill to provide duty-free treatment for certain goods from designated Reconstruction Opportunity Zones in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 497. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize capitation grants to increase the number of nursing faculty and students, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 498. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize dental insurance for veterans and survivors and dependents of veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 499. A bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to repeal the ultra-deepwater and unconventional onshore natural gas and other petroleum research and development program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 500. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish a national usury rate for consumer credit transactions; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. KOHL, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. INOUE):

S. 501. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prohibit the marketing of authorized generic drugs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. TESTER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REID, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 57. A resolution designating the first week of April 2009 as "National Asbestos Awareness Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. KERRY, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BROWN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. FEINGOLD):

S. Res. 58. A resolution designating the week of March 1 through March 8, 2009, as "School Social Work Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 21

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 21, a bill to reduce unintended pregnancy, reduce abortions, and improve access to women's health care.

S. 245

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr.