

policy. If not, the [conservative voices will] have less leadership in Congress, and we will have an energy crisis in the greatest county in the world.

P.S. Can we get some more oil refineries as well?

CORY.

First off, thank you for soliciting comments from your constituents.

Everyone is concerned about, and affected by energy prices. Gas prices are just the tip of the iceberg. Food prices, goods and services prices, utility bills, natural gas up double from last year, airline prices, the housing/credit crisis and a very weak dollar are all affected by our energy emergency. This is not a matter of choice. Either we pursue energy independence or we risk losing the America our forefathers created and our brave soldiers have died fighting for.

Why are we the only civilized country not aggressively pursuing energy independence? France is over 70% nuclear, the EU has plans for over 20 coal plants across Europe, Canada is drilling near our northeastern border, Russia recently gave major tax breaks to oil companies to explore inside their borders and find alternative energy, Brazil is aggressively drilling, China is building dozens of coal plants, nuclear plants and hydroelectric dams, they have also secured a lease (from Cuba) 50 miles off the shore of Key West, Florida. The US hasn't built a refinery in over 30 years. There is something wrong with this picture. Is everyone else on the wrong energy path? Or could it be we are falling behind? I think the answer is obvious.

To me the solution is twofold. Short term and long term. Short term: Allow private industry to aggressively pursue all sources of energy within our borders. We are sitting on billions of barrels of oil, oil shale and coal. Go get it now! We have nuclear technology, coal to oil technology, wind, solar. Long term: Offer incentives to private industries to create new alternative energy sources. American innovators have proved time and time again they are capable of getting the job done. Get the government out of their way and let them lead the world into the next generation of energy production.

DENNIS.

I am writing concerning your call for Idahoans to tell about how oil prices are affecting us. Fortunately I live very close to work so I do not drive much to commute. I do however have to transport children to day care, school and other activities. Trips are almost out of the question now.

Having looked into the facts I fully support drilling in ANWR and OCS. I find it disturbing that we are not already doing so when I hear that other countries, especially some that are not overly friendly to us, are permitting to drill off of our coasts. I think the U.S. should pursue all avenues of collecting domestic fuel sources including coal shale to oil and nuclear. This country should pursue nuclear power in large scale, hydrogen, and other alternatives as well. The fact remains, as you know, that we will need petroleum-based fuels for the foreseeable future and we should produce some of our own.

I think the ethanol projects are a joke as corn is a food product that has so many other uses.

BRANDON, Idaho Falls.

The most difficult part of paying so much at the pump is feeling that the whole situation is—at best—the fault of our Washington politicians who have been influenced by environmentalists who seem determined to return our lifestyle to the horse and buggy era.

The most vital step in all you propose is to start claiming our drilling rights in the gulf

and to pass legislation which allows us to take advantage of our own oil reserves. The environmentalists have hijacked this whole country by tying the hands of oil companies, who would doubtless do everything possible to lessen our dependence on foreign oil by drilling within our own borders.

DEBORAH.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING JOSEPH SONNEMAN

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate the life of a very special resident of my home State of Alaska, longtime political activist Joe Sonneman.

Dr. Sonneman passed away March 8, 2009, from Lou Gehrig's disease. He was 64.

He made his unique mark on Alaska beginning in 1971, when he first visited to research a doctoral dissertation on the relationship between oil revenues and state government. He returned after graduate school and lived in the 49th State for most of the rest of his life. In true Alaskan fashion he proved himself to be a jack of many trades. Dr. Sonneman—known most often around his adopted hometown of Juneau only as “Joe”—was a photographer, postal worker, public policy analyst and taxi driver. He also earned a law degree from Georgetown University and was a frequent candidate for Congress.

On behalf of his family and his many friends I ask today that we honor his memory. I ask that his obituary, published March 10, 2009, in the Juneau Empire, be printed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The information follows:

[From the Juneau Empire, Mar. 10, 2009]

(By Joseph Sonneman)

Longtime Juneau political activist Dr. Joseph Sonneman died early March 8, 2009, at Providence Regional Medical Center in Everett, Wash., after a three-year struggle with ALS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. He was 64.

He was born in Chicago in 1944, and attended Chicago public schools.

After serving in the U.S. Army from 1963 to 1966, including service as a radar repairman in Korea, he earned a Bachelor of Science in economics from the University of Chicago, and master's and doctorate degrees from Claremont graduate school. While in the master's program in government finance, he was an intern at the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston. He first came to Juneau in 1971 to conduct research for his doctoral dissertation on the effect of oil income on Alaskan government financial decisions.

When he finished graduate school, he returned to Alaska where he worked as a photographer, budget analyst, taxi driver, heavy equipment oiler on the Alaska pipeline, postal worker, and university instructor. He became interested in the law and earned a J.D. degree from Georgetown School of Law in 1989. He was a member of the Alaska, Hawaii and Washington, D.C. Bar Associations and conducted a law and legal research practice in Juneau.

He was active in politics all his life, and served on numerous local and state Demo-

cratic Party committees and as Alaska Democratic Party treasurer. He ran for Mayor of Juneau in 1973. He also ran in the primaries for the U.S. House in 1974, and for the U. S. Senate in 1978, 1992, 1996, and in 1998 succeeded in becoming the Democratic Party nominee for U.S. Senate but lost the election to Republican incumbent Frank Murkowski.

He was a member of Veterans of Foreign War Post 5559; Pioneers of Alaska Juneau Igloo Number 6; Juneau World Affairs Council; Juneau Chapter of AARP; and Paralyzed Veterans of America, and served on the Juneau Commission on the Aging.

As a photographer, he followed the example of Klondike Gold Rush photographer A. E. Hegg, and documented the construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline with an 8-by-10-inch view camera. Over his career, he had one-person shows at the San Jose Museum of Art, the University of Oklahoma Museum of Art, the Alaska State Museum, the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry and Harper Hall at Claremont Graduate University.

After his diagnosis of ALS, he moved to Washington to be closer to family members. He lived for two years at the Washington State Veterans Home near Seattle and was also an intermittent patient at the Veterans' Administration hospital in Seattle.

Survivors include his mother, Edith Sonneman of Chicago; and sisters Eve Sonneman of New York, Toby Sonneman of Bellingham, Wash., and Milly Sonneman of Sausalito, Calif.

Burial will be at the Sitka National Cemetery with Jewish graveside services at a date yet to be determined. Arrangements are also pending for a Juneau memorial service.

Donations in Dr. Sonneman's memory may be made to the Joe Sonneman Prize In Photography Endowment c/o David Carpenter, Claremont Graduate University Advancement Office, 165 10th St., Claremont, CA 91711. •

2009 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I would like to recognize the St. Catherine of Siena girls' varsity cheerleaders for being named the 2009 National Champions at the National High School Cheerleading Championship held in Orlando, FL, on February 8. I would like to take a few moments to congratulate them on their tireless efforts to bring their school and our State success.

The event was held at the Walt Disney World Resort and is produced by the Universal Cheerleaders Association. It is the most prestigious event for cheerleaders. Close to 8,000 of the Nations top cheerleaders from 400 teams in 33 States were invited to participate in the competition, including St. Catherine of Siena.

The St. Catherine squad is under the direction of Sandy Spitale and Debra L'Hoste and includes 22 students from the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades. Its members are Lauren Artigues, Ashley Barbier, Brooke Caldwell, Caroline Caldwell, Kaitlyn Coman, Elizabeth Cousins, Claire Crumb, Elise Delahoussaye, Rachel Douglass, Tiffany Forest, Callie Frey, Thia Le, Krista Liljeberg, Kelli Murphy, Allie Nicaud, Tessa Norris, Rachael Poissenot, Jessica Pottinger, Sophia Serpas, Kelsey Singletary, Kyla Szubinski, and Victoria Varisco. They were the only team from Louisiana to take home the title this year.

In addition to their impressive competitive skills, the SCS cheerleading squad also actively participates in community events through the year and represents the youth of the Greater New Orleans Area proudly. They have received numerous Leadership and Community Service Awards for their involvement in various volunteer programs.

Thus, today I congratulate these young ladies on their accomplishments as a competitive team and also as young leaders in their community.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:21 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Zapata, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 38. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service.

H. Con. Res. 64. Concurrent resolution urging the President to designate 2009 as the "Year of the Military Family".

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 80. An act to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to treat nonhuman primates as prohibited wildlife species under that Act, to make corrections in the provisions relating to captive wildlife offenses under that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

The following concurrent resolutions were read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 38. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

H. Con. Res. 64. Concurrent resolution urging the President to designate 2009 as the "Year of the Military Family"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 570. A bill to stimulate the economy and create jobs at no cost to the taxpayers, and without borrowing money from foreign governments for which our children and grandchildren will be responsible, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 49. A bill to help Federal prosecutors and investigators combat public corruption by strengthening and clarifying the law.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*John P. Holdren, of Massachusetts, to be Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

*Jane Lubchenco, of Oregon, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORD on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Coast Guard nominations beginning with Kent P. Bauer and ending with Mark S. Mackey, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 25, 2009.

Coast Guard nominations beginning with Corinna M. Fleischmann and ending with Kelly C. Seals, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 25, 2009.

By Mr. BAUCUS for the Committee on Finance.

*Ronald Kirk, of Texas, to be United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN for the Select Committee on Intelligence.

*David S. Kris, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(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 Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. GREGG):

S. 576. A bill to provide for the liquidation or reliquidation of certain entries of newspaper printing presses and components thereof; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 577. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide penalties for individuals who engage in schemes to defraud aliens and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CRAPO:

S. 578. A bill for the relief of Tim Lowery and Paul Nettleton of Owyhee County, Idaho; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. HAGAN):

S. 579. A bill to establish a comprehensive Federal tobacco product regulatory program, to create a Tobacco Regulatory Agency, to prevent use of tobacco products by youth, and to provide protections for adult tobacco product users through the regulation of the tobacco products manufacturing industry; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. GREGG (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 580. A bill to prevent the undermining of the judgments of courts of the United States by foreign courts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. JOHANNES, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 581. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to require the exclusion of combat pay from income for purposes of determining eligibility for child nutrition programs and the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 582. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to protect consumers from usury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 583. A bill to provide grants and loan guarantees for the development and construction of science parks to promote the clustering of innovation through high technology activities; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. CARPER):

S. 584. A bill to ensure that all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, older individuals, and individuals with disabilities, are able to travel safely and conveniently on and across federally funded streets and highways; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 585. A bill to provide additional protections for recipients of the earned income tax credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 586. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to implement a National Neurotechnology Initiative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LUGAR:

S. 587. A bill to establish a Western Hemisphere Energy Cooperation Forum to establish partnerships with interested countries in the hemisphere to promote energy security through the accelerated development of