

Idaho have been in Washington for a long time. [The public deserves to see more action and less talk on your part.]

LEONARD, *Wilder.*

It is ridiculous that they have let the gas prices get up as far as they have. If we did not have petroleum in the US to make gas it would be different, but we have ways to have gas brought in and it would not take that long. They need to reevaluate this.

DEANNA.

We are small farmers and small business owners. We live 25 miles from town which makes it a 50 mile round trip for everything we do. These rising fuel prices has greatly affected us and has made it hard. We have tried to conserve by buying fuel economy cars, but because of the rising costs we are paying substantially more for fuel than we were a year ago or even six months ago. We believe that what should be done is to use more of our domestic oil, cut environmental red tape on refineries and other things and give incentives for people to conserve. I do not think that by adding taxes to the oil companies is going to solve anything. It will just be passed on to the consumer, which is something we do not need.

RANDY.

It is my opinion that we need to become independent from Middle Eastern Oil. We need to reduce use, but also we need to build more energy plants, of all kinds, in our own country, including Nuclear, and responsibly drill our own oil. If we are not dependent on foreign oil we are not held hostage; We are not depleting our wealth while contributing to theirs.

Thank you for asking for my opinion. I hope you listen to everybody and I hope that you and your colleagues quit playing politics and get it done. I am very tired of the political drama. I have come to distrust all of you.

JANINE.

I would suggest that the government tell the people who want more drilling that the oil companies should drill the millions of acres they already hold hostage under contract before we give them the rest. As an alternative let wildcatters have the new options rather than more big oil hostage land.

KURT.

I am single. I raised two boys on my own, assuming the role of Mr. Mom for a number of years. Currently I work in industrial sales. I am compensated through straight commission. Year to date, my sales are off 30%. As commissions have shrunk, costs have not. My employer has informed me in September the cost for the company vehicle I use will increase an additional hundred dollars a month. One of my sons is out of work and had nowhere left to turn and is home for the moment working odd jobs. He is a new commercial pilot.

I am speaking in literal terms, not figuratively. I do not know how I am going to pay the bills, put food on the table, and gas in my personal vehicle. I will buy a half a tank of gas for my vehicle payday (cannot use company rig), buy a lot of hamburger, and I will draw on my credit line to cover the bills the paycheck cannot.

Somehow I will make it. Not sure how, but I will. This would be easier to accept what we are experiencing had it been unavoidable. The fact of the matter is our current situation was completely avoidable. Congress has failed at every turn to demonstrate the kind of leadership needed. Both parties are to blame. There is absolutely no excuse what so ever for us importing any oil period!

We need to drill now and drill wherever possible while developing other alternative energy systems.

ROGER, *New Plymouth.*

Thank you for the opportunity to share the affect rising energy prices have on me and my family. I am a single mother who drives a horrendous commute every day to get my son to daycare and then work. It just does not seem right that my gas bill keeps skyrocketing up every day while my paycheck stays the same. What choice do I have but to pay the price? It's getting too expensive to go to work! Is there anything that can be done?

LEAH.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IOLANI SCHOOL REAL WORLD DESIGN CHALLENGE CHAMPIONS

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I congratulate the six-member team from Iolani School for winning the national title in the U.S. Department of Energy's 2009 Real World Design Challenge, RWDC. The challenge is an annual competition that provides high school students with the opportunity to apply the lessons of the classroom to important energy and environment problems currently encountered in the engineering field. Iolani School's team placed first of 10 teams gathered from across the Nation in the competition finals held on March 21, 2009 at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. The theme for the 2009 challenge was "Aviation and Fuel Consumption."

I wish to acknowledge the students' diligence, team work, and ingenuity in crafting their winning solution to this year's daunting challenge. Teams were provided detailed specifications and flight capabilities of an actual twin-engine jet aircraft. Teams were then asked to improve the aircraft's fuel efficiency without drastically reducing its load capacity. I wish to acknowledge all team members on their success: Amy Ko, Adeline Li, Anya Liao, Celia Ou, Jessica Lynn Saylors, Julia Zhang. Their parents and families are recognized as well for their commitment, sacrifice, and support that helped to encourage and instill the important values that led to their success.

However, these young women could not have achieved what they have done without the additional support and knowledge of the fundamentals of science given to them by their coach, Dr. Carey Inouye. I commend Dr. Inouye and all of their teachers at Iolani School on their dedication to instructing, nourishing, and inspiring the next generation of scientists and engineers.

I would also like to echo the comments made by U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, who said that this "competition shows that U.S. students, when challenged to excel, are able to perform at the highest levels in science, math and engineering." I en-

courage these students to continue to study and follow their passions for science and engineering. I wish nothing but the best for the students, their families, and coach and wish them and the program continued success in future endeavors.●

OHIO NATIONAL GUARD'S 179TH AIRLIFT WING

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, today I commemorate the work of the Ohio National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing of Mansfield, which has been awarded the General Thomas D. White Environmental Quality Award.

The award recognizes the 179th Airlift Wing's work in environmental quality, restoration, pollution prevention, recycling, and conservation of natural and cultural resources. They were picked for the award from among all 88 Air National Guard Wings, all other Air National Guard installations, and all Air Force Reserve units across the country. It is the highest honor of its kind that can be awarded for environmental work. The 179th Airlift Wing made multiple environmental advances during the period from 2006 to 2008, including consumption reductions, recycling programs, a conversion to bio-diesel fuel, and updated cost-saving environmental plans.

I commemorate the work of the 179th Airlift Wing and congratulate them for receiving this prestigious award. Their dedication to environmental causes and our Nation is an inspiration to us all. I hope you will join me in wishing them the best of luck in their future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO ADIA MATHIES

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Adia Mathies from Iroquois High School, Louisville, KY, for receiving Kentucky's Miss Basketball award. There is only one recipient annually for this award.

Kentucky's Miss Basketball Award is given to students who show excellence in their basketball career. To be eligible for the award, students must show consistent top performance on the court.

Adia Mathies has shown superior basketball skills as a high school senior and throughout her young career. This season alone, she averaged 17.1 points, 11.4 rebounds, 3.9 steals and 3.8 assists, aggressively pushing Iroquois' final record to 33-1 and the win of the State Championship. As a professional athlete, I appreciate the hard work and dedication it takes to perform at a higher level, which she has displayed.

I am impressed by the excellence this student has demonstrated. I am confident that she will have success in greater challenges in the future and perform outstandingly at University of Kentucky.

Mr. President, I would like to thank Adia Mathies for her contributions to

the Commonwealth of Kentucky and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO DAVID YEPSEN

● Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a native son of Iowa as he prepares to leave the nest he has diligently feathered for more than three decades. A journalist who has earned his keep for 34 years at the Des Moines Register, David Yepsen honed his skills as a fair and balanced reporter upon whom his readers grew to depend to separate the wheat from the chaff.

With a few strokes of the keyboard, David Yepsen cut through layers of political posturing to identify stalemates at the statehouse or expose stonewalling from Terrace Hill. A no-nonsense newspaperman, David built a reputation for his astute understanding of Iowa politics and policymaking on the local, State, and Federal levels of government. From local boards of education to county seats of government, statehouse politics, and the Presidential campaign trail, David Yepsen knew how to boil down an issue and size up a candidate's prospects.

Like most Iowans, pomp and circumstance isn't his style. The genius of his political commentary is his ability to cut off grandstanding and get down to brass tacks. If the political leadership got bogged down in partisan gridlock, David would simply explain to voters in his next column how their elected representatives were baling political hay on the public's dime instead of ironing out the looming State budget deficit.

A shrewd journalist, David Yepsen understood how to cultivate contacts and build a reputation built on trust and truth. Cut from the gold standard cloth of journalism, David exercised independence and discovered that loyalty, like representative government, is a two-way street. No doubt the mutual agreement or lively disagreement with his subjects, readers, and publishers made his job all the more satisfying.

Although schooled decades before the Internet, blogs, and other tools delivered news to our laptops and cell phones, this seasoned reporter embraced the 24-hours news cycle. His profession bears the responsibility and privileges granted by the freedom of the press in American society. He upheld his end of the bargain by holding officeholders, public officials, and candidates accountable to the people. But he didn't fall victim to the "gotcha" style of ambush journalism that adds to public cynicism about the media and politics.

Instead, David fell back on his commitment to fairness and evenhandedness. That is the legacy David Yepsen will leave behind as he pursues the next chapter in his professional career. Next month, he will hang up his press credentials to assume lead-

ership of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.

As I mentioned earlier, David Yepsen for more than 30 years has earned his paycheck and served the public as a reporter and political columnist at the Des Moines Register. For more than three decades, he immersed himself whole hog into politics, issues, and campaigns that have colored Iowa's landscape from the Missouri to the Mississippi Rivers. David earned a scholarly grasp of public policy that will prepare him well for his new position. Hot-button issues in recent times have included regulating hog lots; legalizing gambling; preparing for natural disasters and flood control; consolidating government from the courthouse to the schoolhouse; harmonizing Iowa's production agriculture heritage with sustainable stewardship of our natural resources; investing in renewable energy; bringing 21st century technology to rural areas; developing tourism, parks, and trails; balancing needs of an aging society; addressing Iowa's "brain drain"; handling immigration; and juggling interests of labor and business or rural and urban. Instead of treating these issues as lightning rods that polarize people, David took the opportunity to challenge Iowans, whether newcomers or old-timers, to find common ground that would make our State an even better place to work, raise a family, enjoy a vacation, earn a world-class education, and retire.

David could slice through the debate with a lucid and logical reminder about just why it matters to taxpayers if the gas tax is raised during a recession or why Iowa lawmakers should seize the opportunity to take bold steps to restore and improve crumbling infrastructure projects. He provoked Iowans to think outside the box, choosing flatery or insult when necessary.

David faced the relentless scrutiny of his readers and also enjoyed many personal and professional rewards. Iowa's David Yepsen was often called upon by national news organizations for his respected analysis of Presidential politics. His departure leaves behind a big set of footprints in the fields of Iowa journalism and politics. I will really miss seeing "what Yepsen had to say in the Register" but wish him all the best.●

REMEMBERING CHAD MECHEL

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to pay honor to Deputy Sheriff Chad Mechels of Madison, SD, who was killed in the line of duty on Sunday, March 15, 2009, at the age of 32. He is survived by his wife Jamie Mechels and two children, Avery, age 7, and Thomas, age 3.

Chad dedicated his life to a career in law enforcement. He graduated from the South Dakota Law Enforcement Academy in 2005. After graduation, Chad worked with several law enforce-

ment agencies including the Lake County and Kingsbury County Sheriff's Departments. He was currently serving with the Turner County Sheriff's Department when his life was tragically taken.

The sacrifice made by this brave officer is something we should always remember. Everyday heroes, like Chad, are those who keep us all safe. We should all be thankful to our community law enforcement officers who respond to protect the safety of others while sometimes jeopardizing their own.

Deputy Sheriff Chad Mechels paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty, and for that we owe him a debt that can never be repaid. Let us honor Chad and so many other heroes that have made this country great.●

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.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 383. An act to amend the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (division A of Public Law 110-343) to provide the Special Inspector General with additional authorities and responsibilities, and for other purposes.

S. 520. An act to designate the United States courthouse under construction at 327 South Church Street, Rockford, Illinois, as the "Stanley J. Roszkowski United States Courthouse".

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 730. An act to strengthen efforts in the Department of Homeland Security to develop nuclear forensics capabilities to permit attribution of the source of nuclear material, and for other purposes.

H.R. 918. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 300 East 3rd Street in Jamestown, New York, as the "Stan Lundine Post Office Building".

H.R. 1148. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a program in the maritime environment for the mobile biometric identification of suspected individuals, including terrorists, to enhance border security.

H.R. 1218. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located