

over the past several years. Her sincerity, thoughtfulness, creativity, and consideration of others will be sorely missed. Lindsey, thank you for your service to Maine and America, and best wishes for your bright future.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, In mid-JUNE, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering well over 1,200, are heart-breaking and touching. While energy prices have dropped in recent weeks, the concerns expressed remain very relevant. To respect the efforts of those who took the opportunity to share their thoughts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through an address set up specifically for this purpose to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

I own a small construction business and, on the surface, high prices do hurt my bottom line; however, that is not such a bad thing. I have always been conscious about my personal and worldwide energy use, but the fast rate of price increase has made me even more, especially about my driving. My driving efficiency has increased, and my total mileage for the year has decreased several thousands of miles. This is a good thing especially when I consider that everybody I am talking to is thinking the same way. Statistics say Americans are driving less; that is a good thing. It is good the people get humbled and remember that every bit of energy and every material object we use was made in the natural world and refined using human intelligence; there are no freebies.

Americans need to plan a future without oil for energy. For some reason, it is taboo to mention solar energy and subsidy in the same sentence. Solar is the best hope for continuous energy yet nobody wants to subsidize the fledgling industry. Farmers and ethanol are subsidized, though they hate to admit it; the coming second nuclear program will be fully subsidized though they attempt to account around it. Even the fossil fuel industry is subsidized, among other ways, by being protected by the U.S. military. (Oil has caused all the havoc in the Middle East, so Iraq and Afghanistan and all the other military deployments acts of security for big oil). Hundreds of billions go to these fruitlessly revolving enterprises. Let us pay to get a nationwide solar plan fully off the ground. Imagine if every single house south facing roof was solar panels and all flat topped roofs were solar panels, we could power the entire country without having to build another structure. Subsidize and organize turning the entire fleet of cars over to

solar/battery/electric cars. It would work. Ethanol is a joke, nuclear is a waste, wind is like putting high rise buildings far into the countryside, coal and gas and hydro could be back up to solar; to even the load.

PIKE, *Nampa*.

Our family has been working to get out of debt and have breathing room to finally start saving for retirement; but with the price of fuel going up daily, there is no way. In fact we are sinking deeper in debt. We have to really struggle with going to watch the grandchildren play ball or buy groceries. We both have to drive quite a distance to our work each week and now feel trapped. We love our home, but cannot afford the commute, but with the housing market and fuel costs, we cannot sell either! So we are still forced to commute, going straight to where we stay when we go down for our work and then our jobs and back again.

We have always been a nation of integrity, of a backbone, fueled by necessity. If our government will get out of the way and let her people do what we need to do to be self-sufficient again, we will all be better off. It is so sad that so many people think the only way we can make it is if government controls, but when government controls we lose as is shown by the dropping dollar and high fuel prices. We have our own fuel and our own ingenuity, let us use it and refine it.

NANCY.

You may not want my input on the high energy prices, because I see a lot of good coming from them. For one thing, the air is a lot cleaner. Also, I would assume there are fewer car accidents/deaths due to fewer cars on the roads. People are improving their health because they are out there walking, bicycling, etc. And I see them reaching out to help one another. It is also forcing people to be more creative in the ways that they are dealing with the higher price of products/food. They are asking themselves, is it something they want or do they actually need it. They are fixing up the things they have instead of throwing them away and filling up the landfill. To me, I see the high energy prices as a change of direction. A good change of direction.

As for all the money that is being accumulated, I think it would be best used on developing alternate forms of energy—wind, solar etc. Drilling for more oil is just going to extend the inevitable. The oil is going to run out and, while we are waiting for it to run out, we will continue to destroy the planet and ourselves.

KATHLEEN.

Thank you for asking for my experience with the recent rapid rise in gasoline/energy prices. My husband and I are in our mid-fifties, and remember the first "energy crisis" in the mid 1970s when fuel prices more than doubled but were still way below one dollar. I purchased my first car during that time—a Toyota Corolla that got 36 mpg. My husband reserved his Dodge van which had much lower mileage for only special needs trips; then he purchased a Ford small truck (made by Mazda) which got 35 mpg. It travelled anywhere in Montana the big 4 wheel drives did with some weight in the bed in winter. We have only driven fuel efficient vehicles since, except for the special trip farm/plow vehicles.

At this time I drive 36 miles round trip from our rural home to work at IDL in Sandpoint. The 2000 Honda CRV gets 29 mpg with windows down and 27 mpg with windows up and internal fan using heat or AC. I find I fill up every 10 days (extra errands after work) and am spending perhaps an extra \$1/day on gas. Not a big deal.

My husband has telecommuted for his job as an electrical engineer for the last 13 years so he rarely drives his extremely fuel-efficient Honda Fit—a perfect commuter vehicle for one person at 35+mpg. The little Kubota tractor runs on diesel and uses perhaps 10 gallons per summer season. We can absorb that. Our house is fully electric and electric rates have stayed the same. Food at the grocery store has been increasing for a year or two so we eat smarter and raise our own meat.

By learning the lesson of the 1970s, we are not victim to the fluctuations of the fossil fuel markets or contributing greatly to the damages which result. Opening fragile and deteriorating ecosystems to offshore drilling will not bring down fuel prices—people are going to get used to them anyway, as they always have. There are still plenty of large expensive SUVs on the roads in Sandpoint.

If the country, led by Congress, would focus on funneling money to alternative fuels and technologies to get off this destructive bandwagon of the oil companies everyone could be better off. Think about it and please start being a constructive leader.

JAN.

The energy crisis is hitting us like almost everyone in Idaho. It is not bad enough that we are paying outrageous prices at the pump but we are also paying nearly twice what we were this time last year at the grocery store. In Idaho we do not have mass transit to utilize so we are stuck paying for the gas at the pump.

I did have one idea to help Idaho rely less on oil for power. My husband works at the INL and we have seen the negative publicity about nuclear power. The Federal Government owns all that land, as I understand it is about the size of Rhode Island. Why not put wind mills up out there? That would be free power after paying for the wind mills. There is probably enough area for wind mills that they could power the entire state of Idaho without the use of water or oil. You could most likely find some kind of federal grant to help fund the wind mills. It is just one idea for you to consider.

GAYLE.

I find it absolutely ridiculous that we cannot drill for oil within the United States. I find it insane that we are dependent on foreign sources. I find it ludicrous that Congress refuses to do anything about the issue. I drive forty miles to and from work each day. It is not much, but it adds up quickly at \$4.00+ a gallon. I cannot even pay at the pump anymore, because the \$75 limit on my credit card will not fill my tank. I fully support the Drill Here, Drill Now, Pay Less campaign. Please support any legislation that increases our energy independence and gets the price down!

DANN, *Rigby*.

This last school year 07-08 I lived in Twin Falls and attended the College of Southern Idaho. We had four girls living in our apartment. The first semester two of us had vehicles and two of my roommates received help from their parents. In January, those two roommates moved out and the two that moved in did not receive financial help from their parents either. Because of rising fuel costs we mostly walked to campus even when it was cold because we could not afford gas (campus is a good 25-35 minute walk one way). And when we did go somewhere like to the grocery store we car pooled. We only ate out if it was a special occasion but even then most of the time we had large dinner parties at our apt and we had every one bring something. But we made it! However with the rising cost of everything, partially due to the

rise in energy cost, this next year will be even harder. Yes, we could take out student loans for more than just tuition and books but having large amounts of borrowed money with no guaranteed way to pay it back is scary!

On another note, my parents now live in Las Vegas, and I have been here visiting for about a month and a half. My father, who is now 57, has worked hard all his life for our family. Now he works even harder. He gets up every morning to leave the house by 5 a.m. so he can walk 15 minutes to catch the bus and then walk for another 20 minutes to be at work by 6:30 a.m. so he can save a much-needed \$200 a month in gas. It takes him at least 1.5 hours longer each day to get to and from work, that is, if the bus is not so full that he could catch the first one home and would not have to wait for the next one or the next one. He owns two older vehicles that are diesel. When he bought them, diesel was cheaper than gas and they both get 17–18 miles to the gallon. They got the best mileage of SUVs and Trucks. However, even though they are paid for and worth a bit of money, there is no longer a market for vehicles like that so he cannot sell them for close to what they are worth and so he cannot afford to buy another vehicle with better gas mileage.

In my personal opinion, the United States government may not be able to make energy cost go down but I feel that they could make them more secure. The U.S. relies largely on oil and gas from other countries. Most of those countries are in some of the most unstable parts of the world, meaning our energy supply is unstable. We need to bring it home. Yes, there are countries such as Qatar that are stable and I think we should still support them. However, for example, places such as off the coast of Nigeria (Shell and U.S.-based Chevron have had problems due to lack of stability in the region) are not only unstable for reliance of supply but are unstable for the environment. Even if energy cost will not subside, most likely the stability of supply and price would increase and the environment would be better off over all if we were more self-reliant.

EMILY, *Twin Falls.*

My wife, Michelle, and I send our heart-felt thanks for your principled stand for sound energy policy based on factual data and reality as opposed to the potentially catastrophic positions taken by the Democrat party in Congress, and its leadership.

We are solidly in favor of developing our own oil, coal and natural gas resources to reduce or eliminate our dependency on often hostile, foreign sources for the oil our economy requires. We also support an aggressive nuclear power program, and federal assistance to the nuclear power industry in preventing the array of anti-nuclear, anti-power, anti-development and anti-capitalist groups and their attorneys—as well as the dozens of federal environmental agencies—from endlessly delaying or preventing nuclear power facility construction progress.

We agree that alternative energy sources need to be developed by the private sector with as little federal interference as possible, but believe it is misguided to suggest that the oil industry should be spending their capital for R&D into alternative “fuels”. It seems to us that actions to force the oil industry to do so is the equivalent of federally mandating a private industry to incorporate a profound conflict of interest into their business plan. Logic indicates that such a federal action would drive the oil industry to raise product prices to allow their ongoing oil product R&D activities to continue, while pursuing an alternative fuel R&D program for which the industry and its shareholders

would have little, if any, business interest in advancing.

The X-Prize type concept Senator McCain recently mentioned to encourage R&D to produce a new super battery for powering vehicles is a concept I have had and shared frequently for several years, although I question why the Senator's focus was narrowed only to one type of energy, rather than offering the prize for the first “vehicle” to meet defined safety, performance, capability and efficiency standards and allow the private competitors to pursue hydrogen fuel-cell technology, compressed air and steam technologies, advanced internal combustion engine technologies, even micro-nuclear technologies or any combination of technologies, rather than only electrical battery technologies. (Batteries for electric cars might be a practical idea in some applications, but it is doubtful if such R&D would benefit the oil burning aviation or shipping industries.)

Anyway, we wanted to thank you for being a clear voice for logical solutions to oil supply, and for having the courage to stand against the knee-jerk reactionaries who are intent on convincing the American public that industry greed, rather than governmental interference, has caused the current spikes and the price in oil-based consumer products.

STEVE and MICHELLE, *Melba.*

What we really need to do to help our state and our country is to drill, explore, experiment, expand, and adapt. Drill more oil, explore more options for energy, and experiment with new technology to make our state and our country more independent and healthier. Our country needs to expand our public transportation system and make it easier to use. That is the biggest complaint about public transit. Finally, our whole country needs to adapt and realize that this is not the 60s, 70s, 80s or 90s anymore. The economy is different. If we can do this appropriately, then not only do we create jobs, but then we can say we did it without foreign interference.

I am a big supporter of the SUV. But yesterday, I did the hardest thing I could do. I turned in my SUV to the car lot I purchased it from and am now riding the bus system in Boise. It is not the most convenient since you have to make multiple stops and sometimes go a little out of the way to get where you are going, but for the price of two dollars a day, it is worth it. I take two buses in the morning and walk a mile to get to work every day. Every afternoon I walk a mile and take two buses. I am a mom who manages to get it done. It just takes commitment and help from our legislature to get the nation going in the right direction.

SHASTA, *Boise.*

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAND CONSERVANCY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

• Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I take this opportunity to recognize the 25th anniversary of the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County, LCSLO.

Created in 1984 by a group of local residents determined to protect lands throughout San Luis Obispo County, LCSLO has experienced many successes over the past 25 years in its efforts to ensure a proud legacy of scenic beauty and healthy lands throughout the

county. What began as an all-volunteer group working on small conservation agreements has since grown into an established land trust with 16 professional staff members. LCSLO staff and volunteers work to set aside local lands for wildlife, farming, and ranching by preventing poorly planned development; protecting drinking water sources; restoring wildlife habitat; and promoting family farms and ranches.

Since its initial projects in Cambria and Nipomo Mesa, LCSLO has permanently protected over 10,500 acres of land in San Luis Obispo County. The organization has worked to conserve over 100 acres of streamside lands to enhance habitats of steelhead trout, purchased over 300 individual lots to protect the Monterey Pines in Cambria, and restored hundreds of acres of damaged coastal land in the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes. Today, five of the Conservancy's land parcels are available for public use. Parcels that are not open to the public provide space for projects that produce stunning views, protect air and water quality, and preserve local farmland.

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo is a grassroots movement that empowers local farmers, ranchers, and residents to protect the land that make San Luis Obispo County so beautiful. By partnering with local organizations and offering residents the opportunity to contribute hands-on to the preservation of their own community, LCSLO is able to conserve the unique rural culture that is so closely tied to this coastal environment.

For 25 years, LCSLO has worked passionately and effectively to sustain a high quality of life for residents and visitors in a healthy natural environment. I commend LCSLO staff and volunteers for maintaining the natural beauty of San Luis Obispo County and for supporting the county's agricultural and tourism-based economy. I look forward to future generations having the opportunity to enjoy this special part of California for many years to come.●

REMEMBERING PETER K. WILSON

• Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, today I would like to note the sudden passing of Peter K. Wilson, of Lapwai, ID. A lifelong farmer, World War II veteran and father of seven, Peter was a leader in Idaho agriculture. He served as chairman of the Nez Perce County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, and as a member of the Idaho State Brand Board, the Nez Perce County Fair Board, the Lewiston Grain Growers Board, and the Idaho Co-op Council Board of Directors. From 1988 until his untimely death on March 30, 2009, Peter was an elected commissioner of the Port of Lewiston, and served as chairman for several terms. From 1994 to his death, Peter also served on the board of the Pacific Northwest Waterways, and was chairman from 2003–2005.