

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.

He received numerous awards and honors throughout his working life, including the Governor's Award for Lifetime Achievement in Agriculture, Nez Perce County Grassman of the Year and Nez Perce County Outstanding Farm Citizen.

Peter's love of farming, the mountain pastures he called home, and his family was well-known to many. In his contributions to the community and to Idaho agriculture, he touched many lives, working hard and providing strong, principled leadership. Peter will certainly be missed. I offer my condolences to Peter's wife, Pat, and their family at this difficult time.●

HONORING THE LET'S GET READY PROGRAM

● Mr. KERRY. Madam President, Fenway Park, America's most beloved ballpark, will play host to a different collection of superstars on April 30: the young people from cities across Massachusetts including Boston, Brockton, Lawrence, Springfield and Worcester, whose achievements are not measured in batting average or RBIs or All Star Game selections; but in SAT scores, GPA and college acceptance letters.

These young people measure their success by the number of lives they change, the number of young people they help get into college, and the dreams they help make real for hundreds of Massachusetts high school students each year.

Tonight at Fenway Park, you will not find Josh Beckett or Dustin Pedroia or Kevin Youkilis. But you will find Pat Johnson and tonight, to the people at Fenway, he is every bit the superstar David Ortiz is.

Patrick is the incoming Boston College Site Director for Let's Get Ready or LGR, an organization relying wholly on the generosity, compassion and selflessness of college students that guides low-income high school students through the dizzying and daunting college admissions process. He is joined at Fenway tonight by LGR's other volunteers and supporters and by the students and families they work so hard to help.

The college students who volunteer with LGR serve as coaches. These college coaches provide SAT preparation and assistance with all aspects of the college application process to underserved students in five Massachusetts communities. The college application process has become a multimillion-dollar industry and too often low-income students find themselves at a disadvantage. They can not afford the private SAT tutors or professional personal essay advisers more affluent high school students take advantage of. Commercial prep courses cost anywhere from \$1,200 to \$5,000; LGR has a direct cost of only \$500 per student.

That \$500 goes a very long way. LGR helps to level the playing field and ensure the remarkable opportunities that can come from a college education are

not reserved for the well-to-do or well-connected. And level the playing field is exactly what the LGR coaches do. Ninety-two percent of LGR students go directly to college after high school, compared to 47 percent of low-income students nationally. LGR students increase their SAT scores an average of 110 points. LGR has provided support to over 7,500 high school students and engaged over 3,500 college students in meaningful service learning experiences.

I commend Pat and all the superstar LGR coaches at Fenway Park tonight and I thank them for their efforts to ensure no hardworking student with a dream of a college education is left on the sidelines.●

GRAND OPENING OF NUCOR CORPORATION'S DETAILING CENTER

● Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, today I wish to recognize a major business expansion in my home State of Nebraska which will serve as an inspiration for all businesses struggling in the face of this economic recession.

The Nucor Detailing Center will celebrate its grand opening on May 1, 2009, in Norfolk. This is a state-of-the-art facility operated by Nucor Corporation, a Fortune 500 Company and national manufacturer of steel products.

Nucor's story is an impressive one. Nationally, Nucor has 20,000 employees; more than 900 of them are in Norfolk, NE. Despite a downturn in America's economy which has hit the steel industry especially hard, Nucor practices a no-layoff policy and has not closed any of its plants.

In fact, in Nebraska, Nucor is expanding with the opening of its Nucor Detailing Center. The Detailing Center is the fourth Nucor division to locate in Norfolk, which is the only city in the world claiming four Nucor divisions.

The Nucor Detailing Center started as a small group with just seven employees. Today, it employs 70 teammates with plans to grow to 200 in the near future. This grand opening, in the midst of an economic crisis, the likes of which our country has not seen since the Great Depression, is a testament to the indomitable spirit of the American businessman and to Nucor's belief in a return on its investment in its most valuable resource—workers.

Nucor has gained a reputation as North America's largest recycler and as a company which puts an emphasis on safety, the environment and social responsibility. Now, Nucor is adding to that reputation by being able to expand and excel even during troubled economic times.

Congratulations to Nucor Detailing Center on its grand opening! Nebraska is proud to have Nucor Corporation as one of our fine corporate citizens.●

TRIBUTE TO JONATHAN EDWARD KOTILNEK

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Jonathan Edward Kotilnek, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several months.

Jonathan is a graduate of T.F. Riggs High School in Pierre, SD. Currently, he is attending Marquette University Law School, where he is obtaining his juris doctor. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jonathan for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO TESSA JEAN HOLKESVIK

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Tessa Jean Holkesvik, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several months.

Tessa Jean Holkesvik is a graduate of Central High School in Aberdeen, SD. Currently she is attending George Washington University, where she is majoring in political science. She is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Tessa for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO BRENNA JANE BAHR

● Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Brenna Jane Bahr, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several months.

Brenna is a graduate of Aberdeen Central High School in Aberdeen, SD. Currently, she is attending the Catholic University of America, where she is majoring in history. She is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Brenna for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

LAFORCHE PARISH POLICE SOCIAL SERVICES SECTION

● Mr. VITTER. Madam President, today I wish to recognize and pay tribute to the heroic men and women of