

Directors' Council and the American City Quality Foundation, ACQF, the April 2009 theme is appropriately labeled, "Support Planning and Action for Better Quality Communities." For many years the emphasis promoted by the ACQF and its numerous professional organizations and supporters has been to call attention to the vital need for improving American cities through quality planning—via coordinated efforts to produce effective decisions, design, development, management, and action.

As our country's population growth projections appear to reach an additional 34 million people by the year 2020, the importance of proper urban planning as it relates to area surroundings, land conservation, and quality of life becomes a crucial component of the United States' strategy to halt urban sprawl and the waste of both human and fiscal resources. Subsequently, through the devoted work, development, and planning of the ACQF and interested parties, the recognition has surfaced—that coordinated efforts on the part of city, State, and Federal governments, and the private sector need to be exacted more than ever. Such a critical mission must continue until there is mainstream coordination throughout the nation to improve our country's urban settings in terms of cultural, practical, and land conservation amenities.

Therefore, through the efforts of the American City Planning Directors' Council, the American City Quality Foundation, and other interested parties, I thank all who have joined together to address the challenges posed by our burgeoning cities, as the integration of efforts has and will continue to provide us with a plan and hope for the future that assures quality growth for our Nation's urban settings. The ACQF's mission toward reaching that goal has secured both the attention and admiration of the American public.

TRIBUTE TO ADMIRAL ROBERT E. PEARY

Ms. SNOWE. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to the 100th anniversary of ADM Robert E. Peary's discovery of the North Pole—a truly exceptional accomplishment. It was a hundred years ago this month that Peary and his men completed their epic journey through the Atlantic and placed the American flag on the North Pole, marking the historic discovery. And as we commemorate this landmark occasion, the State of Maine has much to celebrate with the lasting legacy of Admiral Peary and all that he has done for our State, Nation, and the world.

Born in Cresson, PA, in 1856, Peary hailed from a long line of Maine lumberman and spent most of his formative years in southern Maine with his mother, following the passing of his father. In 1877 he graduated from Bowdoin College in Brunswick, ME,

after studying as a civil engineer. Commissioned as a lieutenant in the Civil Engineer Corps of the Navy in 1881, he went on to complete projects in Florida and Nicaragua, gaining an expertise that developed his love for the Arctic. Peary made his first expedition to Greenland in 1886 and for the next 23 years, he honed his skills and refined a deft intellect and acumen for the north seas, preparing him for his quintessential journey.

Although there are myriad contributions we could recognize, it is his adventure begun on July 6, 1908, that we most honor as Peary and his men sailed northbound in his ship, the Roosevelt whose plans he developed on Eagle Island in Casco Bay and which was built in Bucksport, ME. I might add! Having arrived at Ellesmere Island with 23 men, 133 dogs, and 19 sleds, on March 1, 1909, Peary set off for the final leg of his journey. For 37 days, they rode by sledge through one of our planet's most hostile environments. And it was on April 6, 1909, when Peary achieved his lifelong dream and history was made as he and his five colleagues were the first to step foot on the barren North Pole.

Although it may be easy to forget some of the challenges that Peary and everyone on his expedition endured, organizations such as the Friends of Peary's Eagle Island and the Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum at Bowdoin College have captured this storied history, providing crucial educational tools for all of our citizens, young and old, as we seek to learn more of the expedition's triumphs on this centennial anniversary. Indeed, the State of Maine and her people have much cause for pride as we celebrate Admiral Peary's contributions this month, honoring a phenomenal milestone.

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:

My husband and I both work out of the home. He is a biology teacher at a high school in Nampa, and I work part-time for a utility company. I work because I have to, but I work as little as I can because raising moral children is the better thing to do. We love Boise! Our home is about equal distance from our jobs, but in opposite directions. I go east; he goes west. Recently, I have approached my employer to allow me to work three full days a week instead of five shorter days. This is solely to save on the expense rising gas prices have on our budget. With the costs of gas, food, electricity going up, we are in a tough spot. I have been with my employer for 8.5 years, and my pay is maxed out. I must rely on a cost-of-living adjustment at the beginning of the new year, but since that is never a guarantee, it is not included in our budgeting plans until it happens. My husband is in his fourth year of teaching, and teachers' pay? Well, you know how bad that is. He will receive an increase in his yearly salary of \$750 this year (for a total salary of just \$31,750), hardly enough to compensate for those rising costs previously mentioned. (What is been most troublesome to me lately is that an individual my father associates with gets \$36,000 a year in Social Security benefits for "psychological" reasons—most likely a result of years of drug use—and she spends \$50/day on marijuana. So while the state government does not even pay my husband enough to provide for a family, they are giving an extra \$4,000/year to support another person's drug abuse.)

The situation regarding higher gas prices is leading us to look into carpooling, keeps us from going out as much, and is a deterrent to buying a mini-van (we will try to squeeze three car seats into the back of our sedan when our third child is born). Several months ago, I considered biking to work; but with the traffic in Boise, I am fearful that I might be hit, and do not want to leave two children motherless. I would like to see more people carpool, or take other forms of transportation. Americans take energy for granted and in the past, have not been the least bit concerned about the impact of their selfish choices. I also looked into a bus route, but none runs very close to our home. In fact, the nearest pick-up is still several miles away.

What should America do? I do not know. Several months ago, I thought a gas ration would force conservation. Sometimes people need to be made to do what they will not willingly do themselves. Nuclear? I am concerned about the waste. Our own sources of oil? I guess I view them like I view my savings account—a reserve for emergencies. Using more of our own resources is a resort if/when we find that conservation is not effective enough. Conservation incentives? Seems that it would be rather hard to enforce, and many do not have the money to buy efficient upgrades. However, building requirements allowing only the construction of energy efficient homes might be a good start. If I am not mistaken, they generally use about 30% less power than a non-energy star home.

I think the only solution is a combination of solutions on a combination of problems. Sometimes you just have to fix everything at once—it is drastic, but the only way to make real change—even for the government. I do not have all, or even any of the answers, but a few brilliant minds, or even a few people who care, could figure it out together.

CHERIS, Boise.

You wanted to know how the rising cost of fuel is affecting me and my family. We, as of

March, bought a window covering franchise servicing Nampa, Caldwell, Star, Middleton, Mountain Home, while we live in East Boise. Our business is to take the choices to the customer in their home so we are on the road constantly. If the problem of rising fuel on a mobile business is not obvious, I can draw a picture. My costs of doing business increases with gas prices, with will affect me and the value my customers can receive. If this continues, it will make doing business very, very challenging. It is especially frustrating knowing that the reserves are available in this country and our elected officials are toying with our lives the way you are. Caps and windfall taxing is not the answer; get serious!

On another issue, I had to get into my own business because after 24 years at Micron my mid-management level job was eliminated to off-shore outsourcing, which again, our government has set the stage to make doing business overseas more attractive than doing business at home.

Good luck. I think if the [conservatives] would make more noise in the public about real solutions the public would force the liberals to made positive productive energy solutions occur. "We the people" are not stupid. Get the issues in front of us and those holding up progress will be removed.

KEN, Boise.

[My hometown] is based around farming. I can tell you that my son did work for a farmer locally and was laid off. The farmer could not afford to pay him or even raise his normal crop this year due to fuel prices, which has forced my Son to become dependent on me. I have no choice but to retire from my job next year due to poor health. With my loss of income to the household and the ever-rising fuel costs putting a hardship on everything, I see my middle-class family and me selling off everything and moving to skid row and being on welfare since fuel costs are driving down employment and raised the cost on most everything in this area. There are lots of stories like this one around here. And a lot of people in this community feel that the government is doing next to nothing to help. I see our nation in serious trouble if action is not taken now to solve soaring fuel costs.

I do not know if I have a specific or particular story about the impact of gas prices on me and my family. I am retired and on a fixed income. You talk about the impact of gas prices, and I say yes, I have become \$50 a month poorer and will soon be \$100, without any increase in income, but it is not just about my personal use. There is a financial impact in a hundred other ways. All food and other services are going up at the rate of 8 cents per item per week. As trucking firms and truckers go out of business and we have heard that a third of the nation's truckers have, we will see costs continue to increase. I used to consider myself to be middle-income but am now in poverty. I cannot afford to heat or cool my home buy good food, enjoy entertainment or visit friends anymore. If I was spending any money and someone was making some, that will stop. It seems that everyone's only solution is to raise prices causing us to buy less and less.

This is going to spiral into another great depression. [We] have got to open up our oil reserves. Allow states to get the oil we know we have. I am for a clean environment but none of those environmental lobbyists is going to vote you out of office because you allow drilling. There are way more people who want fuel. We know that cheap fuel sources are just around the corner. I guess I am just lucky I have a Geo to drive or I could not go anywhere, which reminds me I cannot drive my comfortable cars trucks and

definitely not my motor home. I cannot sell them either as no one can afford fuel for them. I guess that means we can just scrap ¾s of American vehicles just like that because no one can invent a better one and no one can afford to buy it if they did.

Thanks.

ZACK, Burley.

Well I suppose I am one of those few, but, hopefully, growing renegades who believes that \$4 a gallon is one of the best things to happen to the environmental world in recent history.

Cars and oil-run machines are here and we need them. But this increase in fuel costs has spurred all kinds of new ideas and technologies that need money and research. I hope that some of these new technologies will wean us away from the old fossil fuel standbys, and guide us toward new, sustainable fuel sources.

I recently heard a few, very promising things about algae farms that produce clean bio-fuels. They would not decimate the food source or encourage more soybean crops in the Amazon rain forest. Wind farms are growing and solar energy is actually being talked about. Here in Idaho, as you know, the wind blows and the sun comes out in late May and does not go back in until mid-September. These alternatives will not supply 100 percent of our power needs but 30 percent? 40 percent? I keep hearing all or nothing—we need something that will be omnipresent. But in the summer if we reduced 30 percent or 40 percent of our power needs would not that cut our fossil fuel needs too? Solar and wind also work in the winter—and if these industries received some of the huge subsidies that oil companies keep getting, would not they be, perhaps with more research, more sensitive and more productive?

I have read where most domestic oil drilling would not start producing anything for another ten years. Just imagine what ten years of research and development of alternatives could produce with all the energetic imagination that is going on right now. In ten years we might not even need that oil and those newly drilled areas would all be for not. And I think with all those profits the oil companies seem to be making, they could spare a few bucks of subsidies.

Locally, I still see all these expensive houses high in the hills of the Treasure Valley baking in the sun with hardly a solar panel to be found. The transportation situation is stagnant with a growing population and no alternatives to avoid vehicles. There is no interstate train service to or from here, and the public transportation in this valley is rather pathetic. The legislature keeps voting down any kind of local option tax and the possibility for any kind of light-rail seems like decades away.

I ride my bicycle just about everywhere, here in Boise. I see so many more people riding bikes and I think that is so cool. I have also been getting pretty excited by all the innovations I am starting to see out there, glimpses of new and wonderful alternatives to fossil fuels. But I keep hearing the big voice of government saying it will not work, this cannot be done and that cannot be done. But the idealist in me says it can. We are a smart enough country to deal with this in a wise and imaginative way. I know that if we start to let go, a little, of what we have been beholden to for so long, and open our minds to all possibilities then good things will start to happen.

JAY, Boise.

Simply put, I believe we should begin additional drilling immediately off our coasts, in the Rocky Mountains and ANWR. I also support flex fuels/bio diesel alternatives. We

need to build nuclear power plants right away (I support doing this in Idaho; it would be nice if Idaho was energy independent and exporting power to other nearby states!) Please pass on the urgency of doing this expeditiously as it is essential to our national security.

Thank you for the "i-meeting" town-hall forum as it helps Idahoans save gas and conserve as well as participate in this very important process! As a voting Idahoan, I also believe in conservation, thrift, and responsible stewarding of our beautiful state.

TERESA.

We own a small business here in Idaho. We were looking forward to having our SBA loan paid off this year. The SBA payment has been as high as \$2,200 per month, which at times has been a struggle, but we have managed to pay it off in the ten-year time frame. We are now fearful that we will be switching from paying an SBA loan payment to just paying for gas to survive. Our gas bill used to be \$300 to \$500 per month. It has now soared to over \$2,000 per month. Tell us how we are going to stay in business? By the way, I have heard that the wind generators by Mountain Home are not working. Is this true and why?

STEPHEN and TERRY, Mountain Home.

It is not so much that the prices have risen. I understand the supply/demand concept. But what really irks me is that fact that the big oil companies are recording record profits and using the excuse that this will get them through the hard times or they need it for research to find more efficient fuel sources. I do not believe this. It has been quietly insinuated in the past of oil companies buying out any new fuel idea to keep their monopoly on the industry. They really do have a monopoly on the U.S. economy fuel source, and we have no recourse except to try and minimize our fuel use. We have done this by cancelling vacations and even short trips in the area. We also are going to the store less, planning each trip so that we can accomplish the most in one driving trip. The people with lots of money will feel the effects minimally but the middle to lower class are taking the brunt of this crisis. I do not think those with money (higher elected officials) have any idea the difficulties that we are encountering because they do not live that life. Walk in the shoes of some of us for a month and then see what is important and what is not.

I really do not see how drilling for more oil (like in Alaska) will make any difference when the oil companies use the excuses listed above. They are still going to get the highest dollar amount they feel they can get away with. The only way the price will change is if demand drops below what is on the market. But then, the oil companies can determine what is on the market (hold back their product) to keep the prices higher. Unless they are regulated in some way, they can do whatever they want.

TERRIE.

I just got back from a vacation in Yellowstone National Park, and the traffic was the worst I have ever seen in about 50 trips to the park. It was probably more due to timing than anything, but it still indicates that gas prices are relatively low for the middle class. I am more concerned about the affect of energy prices on lower income individuals.

In the long run, we need to focus on other issues, and improved energy costs will probably be an important side effect. The issues I would focus on are:

1. Too much traffic on our highways and city streets.
2. Too much crime in our cities.

3. Too much environmental impact from mining, drilling for oil and gas, and wind farms.

4. Too many farms being subdivided to build houses.

5. The "nuclear waste problem" and "nuclear proliferation problem" are not being addressed realistically.

If we take the obvious actions to solve these problems, there will be less pressure on energy prices:

1. Invest in public transportation. The federal government has spared no expense in improving highways over the past 50 years. Imagine the effect of an equal investment in train and bus service. I have ridden on buses all of my life, and it can be a nice way to travel or commute. The few trains I have ridden were also very comfortable and convenient. This has much more potential to save energy than hybrid cars or hydrogen powered fuel cells. A small van has the potential to provide hundreds of passenger miles per gallon of gas. Buses and trains should do even better.

2. Invest in ride sharing and car pooling.

3. Invest in nice cities. People should be able to live comfortably, with no fear of crime, within walking distance to work.

4. Invest in maintaining farm land as farm land instead of using it to create sprawling suburbs full of oversized houses.

5. Put a limit on the tax break for a first home. Eliminate the tax break for a second home. For one thing, I am sick and tired of hearing how rich celebrities are so "green" and have such a small "carbon footprint" when I know most of them own multiple, grossly oversized, tax-subsidized homes.

6. Invest in nuclear power. The public should be demanding better performance from the nuclear industry just like they do from the airline industry. We want airlines to operate on schedule, cost effectively, and operate safely, even with the security concerns raised by 9/11. We should be demanding similar performance from the nuclear industry and stop fretting about perceived problems.

With respect to the "nuclear waste problem", there is no reason to relate performance requirements to the half-life of long lived radionuclides. There is no reason to treat plutonium contamination as fundamentally different from other toxic metals such as lead, which have infinite half-life. In reality the biggest nuclear waste problem is probably our 700,000 metric tons of depleted uranium hexafluoride currently stored in corroding carbon steel cylinders. This volatile "waste" material is a serious environmental hazard, but should be managed as a major resource. It could be transmuted into plutonium in nuclear reactors and used to produce all the energy we need for the next 500 years. No mining, drilling, or refining would be needed. This would help eliminate the fantasy that we need to cover our landscape with windmills that do not even work most of the time.

With respect to nuclear proliferation, the only way to go is forward. The USA needs to lead the way in developing cost effective nuclear energy technology, so that less stable countries have no reason to develop their own technology. Then we will not need to worry about whether they are producing weapons grade materials. Improved technology should include reprocessing spent nuclear fuel. We should reprocess it instead of trying to bury it. Currently, it is self-protecting due to high radioactivity, but it will not be in about 200 years. We should not leave this hazard for future generations.

The public needs to be educated about energy. The general public has virtually no understanding of nuclear power, and they seem to be generally illiterate with regard to en-

ergy issues. Hydrogen-powered vehicles are unrealistic and do not make thermodynamic or economic sense. Windmills and solar panels have limited potential to reduce energy costs and major environmental impact if we try to push them beyond their potential. The idea that the world can just keep building more efficient cars and more roads is shortsighted and unrealistic. The idea that you can be "green" when your house in the suburbs is four times bigger than you need is ridiculous. Carbon credits are ridiculous. Turning food into alcohol for fuel is ridiculous.

DAN, Pocatello.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL CLYDE A. VAUGHN

• Mr. BOND. Madam President, I offer my congratulations and gratitude to an extraordinary citizen-soldier from Missouri, LTG Clyde A. Vaughn. Lieutenant General Vaughn's 35-year career with the Army National Guard will draw to a close after completing an impressive 4-year tour as Director of the Army National Guard.

Lieutenant General Vaughn has earned the appreciation of our Nation and the State of Missouri for his extensive commitment to the Army National Guard. He began his distinguished career in 1974 when he was promoted to second lieutenant in the Missouri Army National Guard, beginning a 35-year career of dedication, accomplishments, and vision.

In his most recent position as Director, Lieutenant General Vaughn was responsible for the formulation, development, and implementation of all programs and policies affecting the Army National Guard. Previously, he served as Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for National Guard Matters, at the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Pentagon where he helped guide the Nation's response to the 9/11 attacks and transform the Army National Guard from a strategic reserve to an operational force. Prior to his work at the Pentagon, some of his assignments included serving as Senior Army National Guard Advisor for Reserve Affairs, Commander of Exercise Support Command, and Deputy Chief of Staff for Reserve Affairs-National Guard, at United States Army South, Fort Clayton, Panama. He has also served as Chief of Operations Division, at the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, VA, Deputy Chief of Staff, of the G3 at the Pentagon, and, Deputy Director, of the Army National Guard, at the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, VA.

His civilian education includes a bachelor of science in education from Southeast Missouri State College and a masters in public administration from Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania. His military education includes graduating from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort

Leavenworth, KS, and the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

General Vaughn received several awards and recognitions for his exemplary service. His many military awards include the Distinguished Service Medal; the Defense Superior Service Medal; the Legion of Merit, with four Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters; the Meritorious Service Medal, with one Silver Oak Leaf Cluster; the Army Commendation Medal; the Army Achievement Medal, with one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster; the Joint Meritorious Unit Award; the Army Superior Unit Award; and various other awards.

He has proven himself to be versatile and fully capable of accepting and mastering the tasks placed before him. His enduring commitment to the safety of Americans is cause for admiration. I offer my congratulations and sincere appreciation to LTG Clyde A. Vaughn for his remarkable achievements in the Army National Guard. He has continually provided an invaluable service to his country, and we thank him for "showing us" what a dedicated soldier can do for Missouri and for his country. •

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF DAVID BALD EAGLE

• Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I wish to speak today to honor the 90th birthday earlier this month of my friend, Chief David Bald Eagle of Takini, on the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota. Chief Bald Eagle was born on April 8, 1919, on the west banks of Cherry Creek in west central South Dakota. He is the grandson of Chief White Bull who fought Custer's 7th Cavalry in the Battle of Greasy Grass Creek, better known as the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Having a warrior spirit in his blood, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was just being discharged at the beginning of World War II. He reenlisted, and served as a sergeant with the 82nd Airborne Division. In 1944, he was among those brave soldiers who jumped from planes on D-day as a U.S. Army paratrooper. Chief Bald Eagle was shot four times that day, and his story is recounted in "Blue Stars: A Selection of Stories from South Dakota's World War II Veterans" compiled by Greg Latza.

Upon return, Chief Bald Eagle went on to travel as a performer and has acted in at least 18 movies to date. While in Hollywood, Chief Bald Eagle worked alongside some of the most recognizable actors and actresses of that time: Clark Gable, John Wayne, and Marilyn Monroe. All the while he managed to stay connected to his home. For more than 60 years, Chief Bald Eagle has annually participated in the Days of '76 parade and rodeo in Deadwood, SD, providing the many thousands of people who attend the annual event a level of understanding and education about the Native American culture and heritage and the great impact