

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that no further amendments be in order to S. 896, and that on Wednesday, May 6, following a period of morning business, the Senate resume consideration of S. 896, and proceed to vote in the order listed on the pending amendments, with no amendment in order to any amendment listed; that prior to each vote, there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that after the first vote, any succeeding votes be limited to 10 minutes each: Senator Reed of Rhode Island No. 1039, as modified; Boxer No. 1035; Casey No. 1033; Grassley No. 1020, as modified; Coburn second degree No. 1042; Reed of Rhode Island No. 1040, as amended, if amended; Kerry No. 1036, as modified; Schumer No. 1031, as modified; Grassley No. 1021, as modified; provided further, that upon disposition of the listed amendments, the substitute amendment, as amended, be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; the bill be read a third time, and the Senate then proceed to vote on passage of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I have a series of unanimous consent requests to make.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

FOREIGN AID REFORM

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the administration considers ways to reform our foreign aid programs, I want to call attention to a recent Op Ed piece by a Vermont friend who has over 30 years of experience dealing with these issues.

Dr. George Burrill founded Associates in Rural Development—ARD—in Burlington in 1977 and since then he has brought Vermont common sense and values to international aid and development work. Since its founding, it has implemented some 600 projects around the world including extensive work with the U.S. Agency for International Development. Today ARD, a for-profit international development firm, has \$100 million in annual revenue operating out of 43 field offices around the world.

Throughout his career, Dr. Burrill has thought long and hard about ways

to make foreign aid more effective. In his recent piece in the Burlington Free Press, a copy of which I will ask to be printed in the RECORD, Dr. Burrill calls for a “modernization” of our thinking about foreign aid; the creation of a global development strategy to give U.S. foreign aid agencies a way to effectively evaluate past actions and determine what reform is needed; and tools for evaluating progress. Beyond that, he proposes developing a “coherent strategy that will foster economic opportunity” in the developing world, enacting legislation that “elevates development as a foreign policy pillar equal with diplomacy and military defense,” and creating an independent executive agency bringing together the relevant Federal agencies and departments into a single group “giving the executive branch the authority it needs to develop solutions to 21st century problems while providing accountability to Congress.”

Foreign aid reform means many things to different people, but there is one thing we all agree on—it is overdue. Dr. Burrill’s voice is one that should be listened to, and I commend him for speaking out.

I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Burlington Free Press, Apr. 30, 2009]

MY TURN: INVESTING IN SMART POWER IS
FOREIGN AID WELL SPENT
(By George Burrill)

During his campaign, Barack Obama called for salvaging America’s international reputation. Rebuilding international respect and trust, he correctly maintained, is vital to our future security and economic well-being. The president’s new budget proposal indicates that he intends to follow through with this promise. Americans should be encouraged and relieved that the budget supports an increased emphasis on nonmilitary responses to our security and foreign policy interests.

A major component of nonmilitary response is our foreign assistance and development programs. They are critical in the struggle against global poverty, open markets for our products, spread our basic values, and help address global environmental and economic problems. In the 21st century, America needs smart power, as robust a diplomatic and international development capability as it has military strength. Now is the time to modernize our thinking about how to relate to the developing world.

There are several steps the Obama administration must take in order to achieve the promise of a bold makeover. These steps are consistent with the effort to make government more efficient and to ensure that the American public is getting more services and impact for the dollar. And they won’t cost anything.

First, along with the redesign of our national security and foreign policy, which the president has already vigorously embarked upon, government needs to simultaneously create a global development strategy. We need a coherent strategy that will foster increases in economic opportunity for the bottom billion of Earth’s residents and help eliminate the conditions that foster conflict

in the developing world. When the United States leads on international development and relief issues, it enhances our international standing and strengthens our relationships with allies. It creates improved possibilities for America’s global agenda.

Second, the White House needs to work with Congress and representatives of the broader development community in crafting new legislation that elevates development as a foreign policy pillar, equal with diplomacy and military defense. We currently have an outdated, inadequate set of legislation; international foreign assistance efforts that are spread across at least 20 different agencies (which has created competing fiefdoms and inefficiency). No single person or authority is clearly in charge that the president and Congress can hold accountable. New legislation would provide the congressional mandate for streamlined organizational structures and coherent policies, and give the executive branch the clear authority it needs to develop solutions to 21st-century challenges while providing accountability to Congress.

Third, a modernized set of foreign assistance policies and operations must be placed in a single, streamlined, consolidated and empowered U.S. development agency. The ideal option for streamlining and eliminating the current, inefficient, multi-agency situation would be to create a new Cabinet-level department for global development, as is the case in England. Or the White House could work with the Congress and create a new subcabinet, independent executive agency. Either option should merge all international development and humanitarian programs into a single entity. Agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Millennium Challenge Corp., the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and all the international development programs of various agencies including those in the Department of Defense should be merged.

As a candidate, Obama indicated his support for these actions, but there have been no recent public comments by the administration about any planned reorganization. Efficiency calls for it.

America cannot afford an uncoordinated, confused or second-best approach to our relations with the developing world. Our foreign assistance programs have immense importance in addressing global poverty, eliminating the environments that help create terrorists and fostering the advancement of a sound global economy. The Obama administration and Congress must not miss this opportunity to modernize our foreign assistance infrastructure. Getting the most out of the new budget demands it.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. 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 heartbreaking 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:

First I want to thank you for your e-mail up-dates. I am very concerned about this so called "energy crisis". I find it very interesting that as soon as the subprime crisis hit, the banks, fund managers, and speculators found another way to [profit from] the American people. Anyone who reads widely can see what is happening here. [Those who] stole our money, ran up the cost of housing and property, and overcharged homebuyers are not going to be held responsible. Yes, the good old taxpayers paid the price of the high cost of housing and now we are taking it again as we see the overinflated housing market take a dive. The banks and mortgage companies lent money to the vulnerable that never should have been able to buy such high-priced property. Then they covered [the risky practice] by bundling their risk and selling it to all of us as "good investments." But no matter, now the good old simple-minded taxpayers can pick up the tab—cannot let those poor old bankers, land speculators, loan companies, realtors, and land developers take a financial hit. Personally, I think they should all be rounded up, their money and land taken from them, and sent directly to jail for the rest of their lives!

Now, how is all of this changing my life? My home value has gone down, my investments are in the tank, the cost of food is off the chart, the cost of gas is so high that I only go to town once a week, and the vacation plan is gone. I once drove to Nampa, Caldwell, or Boise to go shopping occasionally, and now that is out of the question. We live near Ontario, Oregon, and it only has a Wal-Mart and Kmart store. If I want a nice pair of shoes, a dress, or a nice set of towels, I have to go to Boise, but cannot afford that now. I would buy online, but you never see a sale and the cost of shipping has gone out of sight. Besides, when the item does not fit or is not what you want, the cost of return shipping is too high. Then you keep what you do not want and try not to have a fit.

My only extravagance now is my Wall Street Journal, so that I can keep up on what [what is happening] in business and government. I see that the energy package faltered when the House failed to pass the law that would allow the FTC to investigate and punish motor fuels price gougers. Lawmakers also postponed a measure that would crack down on excessive speculation in energy futures trading markets. Our Congress working for the best interest of the American people again! The House passed the Medicare bill that would prevent cuts in Medicare payment to physicians. However, members of the Senate failed to invoke cloture and did not vote on the issue. The senior citizens can just find doctors that will take Medicare or do without. I was not surprised when the House failed to act on two major domestic spending bills. [It is unfortunate that partisan politics drive the agenda in Congress, rather than the needs of the American people.]

I could go on, but I really have spent too much time on venting my opinion which I know, of course, will have no meaning. I encourage you to keep trying to do what is right for the American people as a whole. I know that the answers are not easy, but you

must keep trying or we will ultimately lose our democracy. Thank you for all of your efforts.

LYNDA, *Fruitland.*

We had to cancel our trip to Ohio to see my parents whom I have not seen in six years. We also are now driving sixty miles an hour to save on gas. We need to lift all restrictions on drilling and refineries and start drilling ASAP and building more refineries. Also start building nuclear power plants. [Stop delaying over partisan arguments and] start doing something good for Americans.

RANDY.

My family just celebrated my son's graduation from high school. Because of the high gas prices, his aunt in Seattle, Washington, and uncle in Denver, Colorado, could not attend with their families. My oldest daughter has a family in Wyoming that I cannot see but only once this year because of the gas prices. Last year I was able to see my grandchildren only twice. There are a couple of things we are still planning to do but because of the gas we will not be contributing as much to our local services like Salvation Army or even our Church. Instead we have to take care of our family first. It affects us financially as we will not be able to save as much for our retirement which is hopefully in another 12–15 years. At this rate, we will have nothing to live on because of the cost of living has taken a hold of our paychecks and the jobs are not increasing in revenue at the same rate. We are not poor nor are we extremely wealthy. We are your working class people.

By allowing another country to put a stranglehold on us in such a manner, you will see a rise in unemployment, more foreclosures, small business closures, children in foster care, divorce, crime and suicide. If our government cared about our way of life, it would take care of us first and not allow another country dictate what we have on our dinner table at night or when we can see our family members again. Congress not allowing for the drilling and refineries to be built is affecting us as a nation. I am ashamed of the direction our Congress is taking us. I believe our forefathers would be too, if they could see what is taking place. Have we not learned anything?

There is only two solutions for this. Sometimes you have to grab the bull by the horns and hold on but the rewards are there. Do not allow another country to have control of our lives. As Americans, we are tired of it.

CAROL SUE.

You are right when you say on your website that we have no other choice but to keep driving and pay the high prices of oil. We live in the country, and we realize that is our choice. Carpooling and public transportation are very limited. We figure it is costing us \$35–\$60 per day just to get to work. And our vehicles get 27–35 mpg! We drive an economy car and a motorcycle, but we also have a family and sometimes have to drive a larger vehicle. We have looked into carpooling, which we are doing and saving about \$20 per day, and we are also looking into growing our canola to burn as fuel. We have also stayed home as much as we can, which on a larger scale is hurting the economy (everyone stays home, no one goes out and spends money).

It is hard when you have to work two hours per day just to pay for the gas to get there. We firmly believe that we should drill our own oil in America and not give our money to other countries. I would rather pay high prices to American workers than to terrorists who want to harm us physically and fiscally.

Still grateful to live in the greatest place on Earth,

JEREMY and KRISTINA.

You asked for our story how gas prices affect us. All I can say is the only people I know who pay \$200 a month are the ones that live in town. As you said, this is a rural state and we do not have any options. I live 18 miles north of Sandpoint; for my car alone we pay over \$200 a month. My husband is a heavy equipment operator. He works all over north Idaho and into Washington around the Spokane area. We pay \$900 a month for his vehicle in gas. We have talked about how he might have to take a lower-paying job in Sandpoint if the gas prices continue to go up. It is becoming very difficult to make ends meet when you are spending \$1,100 a month on just gas. The most frustrating part is when you read in the news that it is speculators driving the price up. There is no shortage—just greedy men, bankrupting this nation.

So my question is why do you want our stories? What do you see needs to be done? From where I sit, I do not see any politicians doing much about it. We just wonder when or if it is going to stop.

DANIELLE, *Sandpoint.*

Thank you for your invite to share my story on how energy prices are affecting me, my family and life. However, I am not going trouble you with my woes. With all due respect, stories mean little; action means everything and it is high time that Congress addressed the problem seriously and in place of rhetoric.

You are correct—we do need to consider alternate energy. The trouble is we need to start doing something about it instead of talking about doing so. In Idaho, we do two things well—we produce abundant sunshine and wind! Take a listen to a maverick oil man and his five-minute plan; he makes a ton of sense and it is worth your time. One cannot say that T. Boone Pickens is a fool. Being a pilot, I have flown the man; I know for a fact. Video: T. Boone Pickens 5 Minute Plan, <http://link.brightcove.com/services/link/bcpid1641244028/bclid1641831933/bctid1653634930>.

However, as well you know, alternate energy is not going to happen overnight, and it will take years to transition from where we are today to where we need to go tomorrow especially if we continue jawboning about it. Until then, until we actually start a real transitional journey, we are going to continue to be dependent upon oil, which is in and of itself not a problem since there is an abundance of oil within the confines of our very own borders that dwarfs that which is in the Middle East. It is high time we stopped worrying about the caribou and goodness knows what else. These are times for action and not words. And again, we need Congress to face facts and stop blocking vital resources of oil.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the oil shale of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming are reported to dwarf the oil reserves of the Middle East and, if you throw in the Athabasca oil sands north of Ft. McMurray in Alberta that the Canadians are exploiting (they say one third of the world's known oil reserves reside there) then in essence if it were not for the [arrangements] that we have with Saudi Arabia we could in essence tell the Arabs to go pound sand and be free of anyone's oil but our own. Or, at the very least the supposed energy crisis would be just what it is in reality, a NON-crisis with artificially high prices that are crippling our economy.

Please, if you truly care about Idaho, Idahoans and indeed, the rest of the country,

and, I believe you are one of the few in [Congress] that do, then take a listen to T. Boone Pickens, do some research into the oil shale in our neighboring states, research the minuscule coastal area that would be affected by drilling in the ANWR and convince the rest of Congress to [move ahead with realistic and lasting solutions.]

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to give my 2 cents worth or, in my case, more like a quarters worth.

MARCUS, *Bellevue.*

We installed propane heating in our home when it was the energy-saving thing to do! The cost of propane then was under 30 cents a gallon. We knew it would not stay that low, but in the last five years we have seen the cost go up to over \$2 a gallon. This past year, our heating cost went over \$2,000 for a heating season. With the high energy prices, we get to choose, wrap up in blankets to keep warm so we can buy gas to go to the store and buy a loaf of bread and gallon of milk or buy heating fuel to stay warm and not eat. Some choice!

UNSIGNED.

My story may be coming from a different angle; you see, I am nearly 62, working for Boeing trying to get enough money to retire and move back to Idaho. My investments have lost \$130,000 in the last six months. My portfolio is fairly conservative or I would have lost much more. I am not wealthy by any means, so that much of a loss will set me back several years in my retirement plans.

All the while I am looking at Congress to come up with an energy policy that makes sense so our economy can flourish. At this point I am so tired of hearing that we cannot drill in ANWR or offshore that I have considered retiring early just to spend my senior years trying to [make a difference on how the Congress represents the people]. With [the] current approval rating of 9%, [Congress should recognize that the public does not approve of its work.] If my approval rating was less than 75% I would be fired on the spot. Think about it—would you fly on a Boeing airplane that worked 75% of the time?

RULON.

The astonishing increases in fuel prices this year are hitting everyone on a national basis very hard indeed. We are a nation that runs on fuel. Everything we buy, be it a necessity such as food or the very fuel we use in our vehicles is shipped in, and the vehicles that ship those goods to us run on diesel, and guess what fuel is priced the highest.

Why this is I have no idea, but I do know that, at the rate that the cost of diesel is increasing, it will not be long until buying food will be something akin to if not worse than the Great Depression of the 1930s. Already I have been hearing of farms all over the USA that cannot afford the fuel it takes to harvest their crops. As a result, the crops are left to rot in the fields.

My own family is rapidly approaching the point of deciding between food, the mortgage, and fuel to get to work. Personally, I drive a diesel pick-up and, in July of last year, 28 gallons (1 tankful) of diesel would cost me \$65-\$70. Now it costs me close to \$140 for the same amount of diesel, despite my diesel pick-up getting amazing economy. I am still getting hit hard by these prices, which have more than doubled in one year.

One thing in particular that I cannot figure out is why the Western states are paying much higher fuel prices than other states. Where I am coming from on this is a interesting innovation on fuel price tracking called the "Gas Temperature Map" [gasbuddy.com/gb_gastemperaturemap.aspx. See for yourself, Western States are paying significantly higher prices than many southern & eastern states are. Why, I have no idea nor do I have the time and resources to research it effectively, but I am sure a lot of other Idahoans would also be interested in why this is the case.](http://</p>
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There is much more I could say on this, but I realize you are a busy man, so I will save it for another time. It is my sincere hope that yourself and other Representatives like you can find a way to somehow turn this nightmare around.

DAN.

Thank you for the opportunity to tell you how the high cost of fuel is affecting me. I live on the west side of Idaho Falls. I work on the east side of the city. I realize that people in bigger cities have much bigger commutes, but we have no real public transit so I have to drive. I own a Honda Civic, but am considering a scooter. Because of the winters in Idaho, that is not a practical option. With the price of fuel, food and health insurance going up every day, all I can afford to do is drive to work and back. I have had to cut out movies, trips, and dining out. I received a letter from Delta airlines that was titled "An Open Letter To All Airline Customers." I hope you have seen it and are in a position to do something to stop unnecessary price gouging. Nuclear fuel is very clean and safer than most other forms of fuel, why are we not looking into that more closely? Thank you again for this opportunity.

KAREN.

The energy issue in the state of Idaho is out of hand, and one that families cannot afford. The state government should be offering land for development of wind energy, and renewable recourses, Just make them paint the towers with camo about halfway up. There should be far more incentives for home owners to add solar power to their homes, and incentives for companies that do that kind of work to come into Idaho. Allowing logging companies to go into our forests and do selective harvest makes a win-win situation for everyone man and animal. A lot of the social services done in this area do not require a car and should be revoked from those who abuse the use of city, county, and state cars. That ticks me off more than the price of fuel.

LYLE and FAMILY, *Idaho Falls.*

Tax credits for clean energy are absolutely essential to our energy future and to our economy. Society suffers from the lack of alternatives while oil companies reap large profits. In spite of all the tax benefits that oil companies receive, they show a reluctance to make investments in a timely fashion and realize large profits, which they return to investors and management.

MARY.

I am a 68-year-old taxpaying American citizen, and military veteran. I live in Coeur d'Alene and work in Spokane, Washington. It is getting increasingly more difficult to afford the gas to drive to and from work. Car-pooling or the use of public transportation is out of the question as I work in the construction industry on various jobs throughout the Spokane area.

The time has come to start drilling for oil in Alaska, Colorado, Wyoming, and offshore. From what has been in the news and from what we read in various publications, all from very intelligent engineers and scientists, we know the oil is there. We have shale deposits in several states that we could be using. We need to work harder on wind and nuclear power. The states want to drill, and we need to lift the federal bans.

We should either sell or give the abandoned military bases to companies willing to build refineries on them. The time has come to quit asking—it is time to demand that this be done. We have the resources, let us use them. The United States of America should not have to go begging to other countries for oil when we have it within our own shores.

We, the people, should not be suffering these exorbitant prices due to the incompetence in all areas of our government, and speculators in the stock market.

WAYNE, *Coeur d'Alene.*

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

SPECIAL OTIS BOWEN LECTURES

● Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that remarks by Ralph Neas be printed in the RECORD.

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

REMARKS OF RALPH G. NEAS, CEO OF THE NATIONAL COALITION ON HEALTH CARE, THE SPECIAL OTIS BOWEN LECTURE, UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME, MARCH 26, 2009

Thank you. It is truly an honor and a privilege to be here with you today as a participant in the Otis Bowen lecture series.

I want to express my appreciation to Dr. Mark Walsh for inviting me, and commend all the conveners and hosts of this gathering. I congratulate Indiana University and the University of Notre Dame for the collaboration that brought IU's medical school to the Notre Dame campus.

I want to especially thank Otis "Doc" Bowen, the 44th Governor of Indiana, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services during the Reagan Administration. His leadership, commitment to the public interest, and his contributions to Indiana and the Nation are exemplary and should serve as a model for us all to emulate.

Dr. Bowen, both Dr. Henry Simmons, the visionary founder and president of the National Coalition on Health Care (NCHC), and former Governor Robert Ray of Iowa, the Co-Chair of NCHC, send their warm regards. Dr. Simmons was one of President Richard Nixon's top health care advisors in the early 1970s and worked on the Grace Commission which in the 1980s found that one-third of all income taxes were consumed by waste and inefficiency. He has devoted his professional life to improving health care for all Americans. And Governor Ray worked with Dr. Simmons and you many times over the past several decades. I am so proud to be working with them.

Our timing is propitious. Indeed, the conveners of this event were prescient. We gather tonight at an extraordinary moment in history: The Nation is facing the worst economic crisis in more than seven decades and Americans urgently need a better health care system; our health care system is dysfunctional and represents an unsustainable drain on our economy as a whole. It is inefficient and inequitable; urgent action is required to systematically address what is an incredibly challenging and morally troubling policy problem affecting every American.

In short, the health care system in the United States is in desperate need of significant reform. However, we should emphasize at the beginning that we need an American solution. We can and should borrow from the best of what works elsewhere. But we should recognize our unique history and the special characteristics of the American people.

The good news is that the President and Congress are seriously considering health