

setting arbitrary time lines for troop withdrawal or dictating specific measures in progress, I don't support that approach with this administration either. Still, I will continue working with this administration to bring specific progress measures or benchmarks out into the public eye.

Last week I wrote a letter to Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman INOUE and Ranking Member COCHRAN urging them to include a requirement for progress measurements in the fiscal year 2009 supplemental appropriations bill. I was pleased to learn today that the committee markup of the supplemental bill we are scheduled to take up tomorrow does include the two elements I have sought. I understand that the bill will require the President to submit an initial report to Congress this year and subsequent reports to assess whether the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan are doing enough toward continuing the President's new strategy. In short, are they doing their part?

The bill also outlines general areas to measure the success of that strategy or what I refer to as benchmarks. Timely and regular status reports will enable the American people to gain an understanding of whether the strategy is working or should be altered. In fact, it will be transparent.

I look forward to the administration defining more clearly the progress measures to evaluate that strategy and to them becoming public. We all want the mission of the United States in Afghanistan and Pakistan to succeed. The more we know about whether we are achieving goals tied to the mission, the more Congress and the American public will be able to support our military, economic, and diplomatic efforts going forward. For too long our standards to measure success in Iraq were vaguely defined. That led to the partisan disputes over U.S. strategy and uncertainty in the minds of the American public. The controversies didn't provide American servicemembers fighting the war with the unity of purpose and support they deserve. Now in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the American people should receive a clear explanation of the mission, an objective set of measures by which to evaluate it going forward, and regular status reports on the mission's progress.

As the Federal Government asks for further sacrifice from our citizens and as we are forced to continue putting our men and women in uniform in harm's way, Congress must provide all available tools to achieve success. We should provide nothing less.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). The clerk will call the roll.

The 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.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, 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.

TRIBUTE TO MARTIN SINNOTT

Mr. DURBIN. I rise today to congratulate Martin Sinnott on his retirement as president and CEO of Kids Hope United. Throughout his career, Marty served Illinois' children and families, first at the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, then The Youth Campus, and finally Kids Hope United. After 30 years of success in the nonprofit social services, Mr. Sinnott is ready for a change of pace.

Marty Sinnott is a native Chicagoan. He earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Chicago. His first job after college was with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. There, he started as a social worker and over the course of ten years rose to become administrator of resource development and utilization.

After Marty left DCFS, he continued his work on behalf of needy Illinois children as president and CEO of The Youth Campus, a child welfare agency in Chicago. During his tenure at The Youth Campus, he increased the organization's revenues from \$1 million to \$13 million. And more importantly, he led the organization's growth so it was serving six times as many kids.

Since 1999, Marty has been with Kids Hope United, a Chicago-based private nonprofit child and family services agency. As chairman and CEO, Mr. Sinnott led a multistate expansion that tripled revenues and, again, increased the number of children and families the agency reached. Kids Hope United now has a 900-person staff, an annual operating budget of \$55 million, and a scope of services that reaches families in Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Florida.

I commend Marty Sinnott for his decades of service to the children and families of Illinois. Congratulations go out to him and his family on his retirement from Kids Hope United. We wish you many years of continued success.

DEPARTURE OF GREECE'S AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, through my duties in the Senate I have an opportunity to work with many foreign ambassadors to the United States. I rise today to mention the contributions of one ambassador who is leaving Washington and returning to Athens, Greece, to serve his country at the Foreign Ministry: Ambassador Alexandros Mallias.

Ambassador Mallias worked hard to represent Greece and its historic cul-

ture—shared by three million Americans of Greek descent—to the United States and our Government. While the U.S. and Greece are strategic partners, working in concert on a host of issues from Afghanistan to anti-piracy operations, our shared values transcend our interests, and we hold in common a longstanding respect for democracy and freedom, whether in Boston or in Athens.

During his tenure, Ambassador Mallias was particularly active with Congress, and held many presentations and briefings for Senators, Members of Congress and their staffs. I especially appreciate his efforts in helping make the recent visit of Greece's Foreign Minister, Dora Bakoyannis, whom I had the pleasure to host at a Working Coffee of the Foreign Relations Committee, so productive. The Ambassador was also involved with think tanks, advocacy groups, grassroots organizations and universities, traveling widely in the U.S. to engage civic leaders, Greek Americans, students and other people on important bilateral issues. His work with Jewish and African American communities was also significant, earning him numerous commendations, including a Martin Luther King Award.

Many of us in Congress will miss his fine work and I wish him the very best.

TRAVEL PROMOTION ACT OF 2009

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, yesterday I introduced, with Senators ENSIGN, INOUE, MARTINEZ, KLOBUCHAR, and others, the Travel Promotion Act of 2009. We seek with this bill to increase travel to the U.S. and rebuild the country's place in the global travel market. After 9/11, the number of overseas travelers to the U.S. decreased dramatically and has still not recovered. In addition, the current U.S. economic downturn has caused many American families to cut back on vacation plans and our travel industry is struggling.

Travel and tourism are a crucial part of our economy. Travel expenditures in the U.S. are estimated to be \$775.9 billion for 2008. Yet other countries have gained market share to our detriment. Foreign travelers are going elsewhere.

The absence of Federal leadership in travel promotion has resulted in States having to step in to fill that void. An example is the effort made by my home State of North Dakota, where tourism is the State's second largest industry. Research by North Dakota State University found that in 2007 out-of-State visitors spent \$3.96 billion in North Dakota. The investment that North Dakota made to encourage travel and tourism has reaped enormous benefits. But we can only imagine how many tourists would enjoy each of our States if we did not just leave the promotion to the States, but made that investment as a Country.

The lack of a coordinated Federal campaign creates a comparative disadvantage with countries that have

centralize ministries or offices to encourage international travel to their countries. The example of North Dakota should be a lesson for the entire country. The U.S. offers unique and diverse destinations for travelers—a small investment in national coordination has the potential to create a significant windfall for our economy.

The Travel Promotion Act of 2009 will promote travel to the U.S., including areas not traditionally visited, highlighting the U.S. as a premier travel destination. The bill will improve communication of U.S. travel policies and perceptions of the process—negative perceptions can often deter foreigners from traveling here. Our communities will benefit from growth of this multibillion-dollar industry—with an increase in visitors they will experience an expansion of jobs and local economies.

The bill initiates a nationally coordinated travel promotion campaign established in a public-private partnership to increase international travel to the United States. It creates a Corporation for Travel Promotion, an independent, nonprofit corporation, to run the travel promotion campaign. The program will be funded equally by a small fee paid by foreign travelers visiting the U.S. and matching contributions from the travel industry.

This is a great country, and we should welcome visitors to our shores to meet our people and experience our culture.

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 following the submissions, those prices are now on the way back up and 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. Today marks the last of the submissions, a process that has taken approximately ten months to complete. But this concern—our national energy policy—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. These 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:

Not too long ago, I was considering purchase of a residential solar array. I have read examples about people in other states (California, Massachusetts, etc.) who had implemented a solar array at home (including an inverter), which enabled them to generate some of their own power/electricity. Most importantly, they are able to sell their excess power via the inverter to the grid when they are not using it. This is an equal rate, meaning that the utility company would buy it at whatever their current rate was at that time of day. Basically, your electricity meter spins backwards according to the amount you contribute to the utility. In this way, people are able to "bank" kilowatts into the grid so that the power they used at night was somewhat paid for (depending on the size of their array, rate of usage and amount of sunshine available, obviously).

After talking to some people locally, I have heard that Idaho Power does not have anything remotely like this policy in place. In fact, it sounded like they are only required to pay 50% the value of the power your array might generate and feed to the grid via your inverter, and only for a set volume. After reaching a particular level, the utility would be capturing a lot of that resident provider's power for free. This appears to be an unfair practice to me, and really tramples on any incentive for buying and implementing a residential solar array. There is a federal tax credit available, but that just addresses start-up costs, not long-term usage and maintenance.

I am no energy expert and do not claim to have validated all of the data I put forth above, but I am very interested in pursuing a solar-energy based solution to cut my long-term energy costs. Given the days of sun per year in southwest Idaho, this seems like a no-brainer.

Please tell me about your position on residential solar energy implementation practices here in Idaho, and specifically how you would vote on a bill that would require our local energy provider (read: Idaho Power) to fairly compensate residential energy providers, using the scenario I mentioned above. This will directly impact how I vote in the future.

JOHN, Boise.

Senator Crapo, this information seems to be right on. I hope you will take the time to read it.

MARY, Sandpoint.

Dear Mary,

On several occasions in the past few months, I have written about the impact of skyrocketing fuel prices on airline customers—in their daily lives and when they travel (Final Approach May 1 and Final Approach May 28). In the long run, to lower oil prices for all Americans, we need to increase domestic supply, increase exploration, alternative energy sources and conservation. However, one near-term solution to the problem is for government to investigate and rein in oil speculators.

What is the Commodities Market?—Commodities are raw materials purchased by manufacturers of finished products such as food manufacturers, oil refiners or builders. Businesses that are highly dependent on oil—refineries, heating oil dealers, airlines and trucking companies among others—lessen their risk of significant price fluctuations by purchasing future delivery contracts at predetermined prices in what is known as the commodities or futures markets. The two largest U.S. commodities markets or futures exchanges are the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and the New York Mercantile Exchange, where people trade standardized futures contracts; that is, a contract to buy

specific quantities of a commodity at a specified price with delivery set at a specified time in the future.

What is the Problem with Oil?—There is a significant disconnect between the paper market for oil (speculators) and the physical market for oil (consumers). In recent years, speculators have taken advantage of actual consumers of oil by bidding up the price for futures contracts. If a speculator purchases a contract for delivery of oil at a high price six or 12 months in the future but has no intention of actually taking delivery of the oil in that contract, then a physical customer who needs that oil—to deliver home heating oil, to operate trucks or airplanes, or even to process in a refinery—will be forced to pay the higher price in order to obtain the oil that is needed.

How Do They Get Away with That?—Increasingly, sophisticated institutional investors have managed to manipulate the rules and regulations governing commodities transactions through a series of exemptions and waivers, including the so-called "Enron loophole," low margin requirements and the dodging of U.S. public disclosure requirements. These complex arrangements have a similar impact: They put people engaged in oil-related businesses at a disadvantage with those who gamble relatively small sums that the price of oil will increase out of proportion to marketplace demands. If that happens, as it has regularly over the past few years, those who need oil for their businesses pay a premium, which is passed on to you—the consumer.

What Can Government Do Now?—In the near term, Congress needs to address the impact of unchecked speculation in the commodities market.

Commodities trading is overseen by a small, but very powerful government agency known as the Commodities Futures Trading Commission (CFTC). Congress can require the CFTC to implement a host of controls such as imposing limits on the quantity of commodities contracts speculators may purchase, closing the loopholes that allow speculators to trade exempt from any government oversight or regulation, and requiring reporting by those who are engaging in speculation.

Experts say that closing regulatory loopholes in the trading of commodity futures will result in a significant reduction in fuel prices.

What's Next?—Congress is expected to debate some of these issues in the next few weeks and it is urgent that they hear your voice. To facilitate public participation in the debate over speculators, we have launched a broad-based coalition, S.O.S. NOW, that provides a wide array of information on speculation and its impact on the price we all pay for oil. S.O.S. NOW stands for Stop Oil Speculation Now, and we urge you to go to the Web site www.stopoilspeculationnow.com and send a message to Congress about oil speculation.

AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DR. KANU CHATTERJEE

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am pleased to pay tribute to world-renowned cardiologist Kanu Chatterjee as he retires from the University of California at San Francisco—UCSF—Medical Center after 34 years of dedicated service.

Dr. Chatterjee was born in what is now Bangladesh and moved with his