

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

family to Calcutta, where they remained unsettled for many years. His father passed away just before he graduated from R.G. Kar Medical College in 1956. To support his family, he took the job of medical officer at the IISCO Hospital at Burnpur. In 1963, Dr. Chatterjee left India for the United Kingdom to further his studies. In 1971, he was recruited to direct the inpatient cardiology service at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. Dr. Chatterjee joined the UCSF Medical Center staff in 1975 as director of the cardiac care unit and associate chief of cardiology, where he became the Ernest Gallo Distinguished Professor of Medicine in the division of cardiology.

A beloved physician, teacher, and researcher, Dr. Chatterjee has worked tirelessly over the last 30-plus years in the fields of diagnosing and managing coronary artery disease, heart failure, and pulmonary hypertension. He is also a world-renowned researcher in vascular reactivity and heart failure and has pioneered the study of drugs, such as ACE inhibitors and vasodilators, that have become the standard of care for heart failure. With such a long-standing list of professional accomplishments, it is all the more touching to hear Dr. Chatterjee's patients speak with genuine gratitude and heartfelt emotion about his expertise and compassion.

As Dr. Chatterjee prepares to move on to his new half-time position at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, I wish him many more years of continued leadership and success in the field of cardiology.

I commend Dr. Chatterjee for his 34 years of dedicated service to the UCSF Medical Center community. Along with his friends and admirers throughout the San Francisco Bay area, I thank him for his tireless efforts and wish him the best as he embarks on the next phase of his remarkable life.●

REMEMBERING ALEX DEL RIO

● Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, every day, law enforcement officers across the Nation make tremendous sacrifices to fight crime and keep our communities safe. On November 22, 2008, one of those officers tragically lost his life while serving in the line of duty. The officer was 31-year-old Alex Del Rio, a Florida native, a loving son, and an outstanding member of the Hollywood, FL, police department.

Although Alex's life ended just 2 months short of his 32nd birthday, he lived his life to the fullest. He was born in Miami and attended Winston Park Elementary in Miami and McMillian Middle School in Kendall. At the MAST Academy High School in Miami, Alex was a tremendous student, a member of the JROTC Color Guard, and known by his friends as someone who always did the right thing.

After joining the Hollywood Police Department in 1996, Alex began his career as a part-time community service

aide and earned a full-time position on the force in 1999. He held positions in patrol, special operations motors and special operations for DUI traffic homicide. He was named Hollywood Police Department's "Officer of the Month" in October of 2003 and a finalist for the 2003 "Officer of the Year." His colleagues knew him for his sense of humor, his likability, and his love for the job.

Alex's mother Miriam Fernandez has turned her personal tragedy into opportunities for others by establishing the Alex Del Rio Foundation. The foundation aims to enrich the lives of children in south Florida by providing scholarships and promoting the ideals Alex embodied.

His commitment to serving others has touched not only those in Hollywood but also those who work in law enforcement in other States. Officer James E. Manley from the town of Lloyd, NY, was so inspired by Alex's story that he has decided to ride more than 300 miles to be here in Washington in Alex's honor. Officer Manley will join Alex's family and others this week in a candlelight vigil and memorial service for fallen officers at the National Law Enforcement Memorial. I join them in honoring Alex and the many other men and women of our nation's law enforcement agencies who have given their lives protecting and serving our communities.●

HONORING JOHN T. NOBLE TRUCKING

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, later this month, we will pause to commemorate those men and women who have given the ultimate sacrifice to defend our Nation and the freedoms we enjoy. On Memorial Day, families of our fallen members of the Armed Forces visit the graves of their loved ones throughout our Nation, often at veteran's cemeteries, to remember our fallen heroes. I rise today with tremendous gratitude to recognize the generosity of two Mainers, John and Joyce Noble, and their business, John T. Noble Trucking, for their dedicated efforts in supporting the creation of the Northern Maine Veteran's Cemetery as a place of rest for thousands of Maine's bravest.

John T. Noble Trucking, a thriving business since 1957, is located in the Aroostook county city of Caribou. A multifaceted company, Noble Trucking provides its customers with a wide variety of services, including landscaping services, commercial deliveries of fuel products as well as truck maintenance, welding, painting, and body repair.

Mr. and Mrs. Noble are well known in the Caribou community for their philanthropic initiatives. The Nobles have donated to countless causes within their community, and in characteristic Aroostook County fashion, have made many of these donations on the condition of anonymity. Organizations like the Caribou Recreation Department, the Northern Maine Fairgrounds, Cary

Medical Center, The Christopher Home and the Caribou Historical Society are just a few of the many grateful County charities that have benefitted immensely from the Nobles' friendship and contributions. Perhaps their most notable work has been their advocacy and determination on behalf of the Northern Maine Veteran's Cemetery in Caribou.

The idea for Maine's northernmost veterans cemetery was first proposed in 1998. After serious study that found overwhelming support among the community, the initial approval was given by the governor in February 1999. In the spring of that year, the Northern Maine Veterans Commemorative Cemetery Corporation was formed to oversee all aspects of the cemetery's development.

John Noble, an honorably discharged veteran himself and his wife Joyce, who also admirably supported her husband's service to our country with stalwart dedication, certainly felt a particular kinship to the development of an appropriate resting place for our national heroes. In order to ensure that the dream of so many veterans became a reality, John and Joyce Noble stepped forward to offer 33.4 acres of their own land for use by the Corporation. Their heartfelt contribution expedited the plans for the Northern Maine Veteran's Cemetery and the seeds of charitable giving had taken root, facilitating a grassroots effort that culminated in what is today a regal and honored resting place for our most deserving men and women who served this country with honor and distinction.

The Nobles' ongoing efforts inspired a can-do spirit that sparked a dedicated group of volunteers into determined action. With the cemetery facing a delay in state funding, the Nobles offered to help with the construction and maintenance of the cemetery's lands until the funds became available. Additionally, the Nobles helped make the cemetery more private and solemn by planting trees around its perimeter. When the cemetery was finally dedicated on June 1, 2003, the Nobles had left a substantial mark on this sacred place and continue to support it today.

An extraordinarily modest couple, John and Joyce Noble have made significant contributions to the appearance and well-being of Caribou. Their beautiful gesture of kindness resulted in a respectable final resting place for those who gave our Nation the fullest measure of commitment. It is their selfless spirit and magnanimous nature that have made them stand out in the Caribou community for years. I thank Mr. and Mrs. Noble for their incredible generosity, and wish them and their company, John T. Noble Trucking, much success for years to come.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 5:01 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by