

newscast, and she has coanchored at 5 and 10 p.m. for the last 12 years.

It is a very unique thing, as you know, Mr. President, in television to work your entire career in one place, particularly in your hometown. Most journalists move from city to city—not Kim. She loves New Orleans, and New Orleans loves her back.

I have been interviewed any number of times, with great admiration from Ms. Holden—not always with great joy because Kim is tough. She is tough as a boot as a journalist. She does her job, but she is very, very fair. She is in a world now of agenda journalists who have an agenda of their own—not Kim Holden. Not Kim Holden. She called the balls and the strikes. I don't even know what party she is in. I don't care which party she is in. She was just a pro.

Kim, as I said, has retired, and she has had an extraordinary career. When you go back and look at her awards, she has received an Emmy and two Edward R. Murrow Awards for reporting. The Associated Press named her Reporter of the Year twice.

Throughout her career at FOX 8 News, Kim has covered everything from the COVID-19 pandemic to hurricanes, including Hurricane Katrina, to the New Orleans Saints winning the Super Bowl.

I think, in her next chapter, Ms. Holden is going to spend some quality time—she deserves it—with her husband Bobby and her four children and her six grandchildren.

So I just wanted to recognize Kim Holden today and to thank her for giving so much to the profession of journalism and to thank her for giving so much to my State in Louisiana. And I wish her the best in her next chapter.

ENERGY

Mr. President, now on the less pleasant subject which I wish I didn't have to talk about—deeply, profoundly stupid; deeply, profoundly stupid—that is the only way that I know how to describe one of the worst decisions by an administration that has become famous for bad decisions. I am talking about President Biden's assault on sustainable, affordable energy.

The people of Louisiana know, and the people of America know that they are now paying \$90 to fill up their cars and tanks with gas because the Biden administration killed the Keystone Pipeline, canceled our offshore oil leases, and forfeited America's energy independence. We were energy independent. The Biden administration forfeited it.

What seems to be underappreciated, however, is how President Biden's agenda is driving up the price not just of oil but of all kinds of necessities that American and Louisiana families need every day. It is not just about oil and gas. It is about everything.

Not only do most goods get to our homes after riding in trucks and planes and cars and ships powered by gas or diesel, but a lot of our plastics and

other products, if you think about it, they are also made from petroleum. Actually, only 60 percent of oil in the world gets used as a fuel. Forty percent of the global oil supply ends up in other things, things other than cars and trucks—in products.

That means that it doesn't just cost people more to get to and from the store. It means almost everything in the store costs more because of its connection to oil. Some medicines come from oil. Microfiber comes from oil. Mascara comes from oil. Synthetic leather comes from oil.

Do you have a phone case or a handbag or a chair or a car made with plastic? That is oil. That is oil.

Now, not everything is made from oil. Some goods that you buy are not made from that natural resource. But I bet they are packaged in plastic. And all of these items, all of these household necessities are casualties of President Biden's assault on sustainable energy.

Here is a fat fact: Our economy can't run without fossil fuels. Now, I am not suggesting that fossil fuels should be our only source of energy. Certainly, we should take advantage of the efficiencies we can find in wind. I believe in wind and solar. I believe in solar—and nuclear and hydrogen and hydroelectric. But part of a sensible, sustainable, affordable energy plan has to include fossil fuels.

Ours is the greatest economy in all of human history. It can't run without energy, and 80 percent of our energy today comes from fossil fuels. That is just a fat fact.

The truth is that American ingenuity—and I am referring to fossil fuels—has made the most out of one of the most versatile resources that the world has ever known, but the Biden White House is determined to punish us for that innovation—just determined to punish us—by making every single part of the American dream more expensive. Even necessities that aren't directly made from petroleum depend on affordable fuel to reach American families.

Record high inflation and gas prices have sent Americans to food pantries. Why? Because even fruits and eggs and milk are becoming unaffordable. The latest reports show that many Americans are paying 8.6-percent higher prices today than they were last year. But we know it is more than that. I know those are the official government numbers, but we know it is more than that. Eggs are up 32 percent. Milk is up 16 percent. Flour is up 14 percent. Baby food—when you can find it—is up 13 percent. These aren't luxury items. These are staples that Americans depend on every single day.

I mean, why is a Louisiana man telling us “[m]y food budget is insane”? My food budget is insane. “[I]t's gone up \$100–150 a week. So, it's becoming more and more difficult, to buy the same thing I bought a year or two years ago.”

That is not just a Louisianian talking. That is all across America.

Why did a woman in Baton Rouge realize that fruits and vegetables—not sirloin steak, fruits, and vegetables—are breaking her bank? She is cooking more with rice and bread instead of fruits and vegetables. The high grocery prices for this lady are gutting her and her family like a fish. And that is just a fact—a very unhappy one, but it is a fact.

Now, high oil prices are also waterboarding our farmers, which contributes to these high food prices. Did you know that we make industrial fertilizer from fossil fuels? And when natural gas costs more, so does fertilizing a field of wheat or corn or soybeans. Some of our herbicides right now are twice as expensive as they were, if farmers can find them.

Tractors drink diesel. Duh. So do irrigation systems. A gallon of diesel—1 gallon—a year ago, you know what it was? It was \$3.23. You know what it is today? It is \$5.20.

Now, what does this mean for Louisiana rice farmers and other growers? For every extra dime farmers spend on a gallon of diesel—every extra dime—a grower will spend about \$4.50 more for an acre of rice, \$2.30 more for an acre of cotton, and an extra \$1.74 for an acre of corn.

Corn growers—I mentioned corn growers—they also depend on nitrogen fertilizer, which we make with methane. And then corn—I mentioned corn—corn goes into cereal. It goes into sweetened drinks, peanut butter, baby food, ketchup, salad dressing.

You know, I don't mean to be ugly, but this administration's energy policy is deeply, profoundly stupid. And it is dangerous.

So my people are feeling President Biden's gas hike from the gas pump to the grocery store, to the doctor's office.

A lot of the raw materials that make our medicines and healthcare products are made from—guess what—petroleum.

Oil goes into our burn creams. Do you ever burn yourself, have to go to the local grocery store or the local pharmacy, buy something to put on your burn? That cream comes from oil.

You have allergies? Those allergy pills are made, in part, with oil.

Do you ever get a cold, take a little NyQuil, take some cold tablets? You need oil to make them. Our kids' gummy vitamins are made with oil. The bandaids in your medicine cabinet, they are made from oil.

The President's assault on fossil fuels is hitting my people in Louisiana, and they are hitting the American people so hard they are coughing up bones. My people and the people of America are increasingly having to dip into their savings accounts just to afford everyday items, not to take a cruise, not to buy a new car, not to buy some new clothes to look good at church on Sunday—for household necessities.

And on top of that, in addition to going into their savings account, my people and the people all across America are having to charge more and more and more to their credit cards, not for luxuries but for staples, for necessities.

All of this inflation caused, in part, by the President's bone-deep, down-to-the-marrow stupid energy policy is costing the average American and Louisiana family \$635 a month.

Now, think about that—\$635 a month. Let's call it \$7 to \$8,000 a year. If you are a mom making \$40,000 a year and you are a dad making \$40,000 a year and you have got two children and you have a home—nothing special, you know, \$200,000 home; it has a mortgage—mom and dad have to go to work. So they have to have automobiles. They have car payments. They are using every penny of that \$80,000 a year. And now, all of a sudden, here comes inflation, and they have got to come out of pocket with an extra \$7 to \$8,000 a year. Where is the money going to come from? And just about every middle-class American is experiencing that right now.

Now, recently, the President sent a letter. He sent a letter to the top oil companies. In the letter—it was kind of a snippy letter, frankly—he demanded that the oil companies ramp up their refining operations to try to slow the rising energy prices and to shore up supply. Isn't that special? The same President—he ran on it. He did it. He ran on it. He said he would do it, and he has done it. The same President who promised to end fossil fuels is now blaming the energy industry for historical oil and gas prices.

The truth is, this administration refuses to accept responsibility for bad policies. And I don't know why they pursued this policy, other than just to try to check off a promise made to satisfy the woke agenda.

For the sake of Americans' economic futures and for the sake of our national security, we cannot continue to rely on foreign oil imports—we can't—while pretending to run this country using wind, solar, and wishful thinking because that is what the President's new policy is on energy. It is wind. It is solar. It is wishful thinking. Wishful thinking doesn't fill gas tanks or grocery carts.

And the President this week will be in Saudi Arabia. He is not there as a tourist. He is in Saudi Arabia to beg the Saudis to produce more oil, after he has already forfeited America's energy independence, and he refuses to take his boot off the throat of the oil and gas industry to allow our oil and gas producers to produce our own oil.

So think about it. This is the President's new energy policy. Let's don't produce our own oil and gas. Let's give up our energy independence. But we have to have oil and gas. So what do we do? The President's new policy is, let's give up our own oil and gas and let's buy oil from foreign countries that

hate us so those foreign countries will have more money to buy weapons to try to kill us. It just makes no sense. And the people of Louisiana deserve better. And the people of America deserve better.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNIZING OLE MISS REBELS AND THE PEARL RIVER COMMUNITY WILDCATS

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, for the second year in a row, the State of Mississippi is the center of the universe for college baseball. Senator HYDE-SMITH and I are proud and delighted this afternoon to congratulate not one but two Mississippi collegiate baseball teams on becoming national champions for their respective divisions this year. Those teams are the Ole Miss Rebels and the Pearl River Community Wildcats.

It was just last year that the Mississippi State Bulldogs won their first-ever College World Series national championship. And with the new year, came even more successful baseball in Mississippi.

Last month, after sweating out selection day, Ole Miss went to the NCAA Division I Baseball Tournament and won 10 out of 11 games, sweeping Oklahoma in the final round of the College World Series to become national champions.

Just weeks earlier, Pearl River Community College, located in Poplarville, MS, defeated Madison College of Wisconsin in the Division II Junior College World Series. After spending the entire season ranked in the top five, Pearl River won five out of six games in the playoffs, defeating Florida State College at Jacksonville, Lansing Community College, and, finally, Madison College in a three-game series finale.

The Wildcats dropped game one to Madison, but then roared back with a 19-to-1 victory in game 2 and a decisive 7-to-2 victory in game 3. They finished their season with a sparkling record of 45 wins and 11 losses.

Just think about this for a moment. Three college baseball national titles in 2 years for the State of Mississippi.

Congratulations also go to the University of Southern Mississippi, which had an excellent season and even hosted their first super regional in Hattiesburg, ending with a record of 47 wins and 19 losses.

This year's Ole Miss championship run is a comeback story for the ages. After spending the early parts of the season ranked No. 1 in the Nation, the Rebels went into a deep slump in April, losing 4 straight series and 11 out of 16 games. In May, they were among the last 4 teams to be included in the field

of 64. But they had finished the regular season hot, and some people believed they just might carry that momentum into the playoffs. And they did, outscoring their opponents 46 runs to 11 down the stretch.

Led by Coach Mike Bianco and Team Captain Tim Elko, Ole Miss beat one team after another—first Arizona and Miami in the regional, then Southern Miss in the Hattiesburg Super Regional, then Auburn and Arkansas in the College World Series, which led to a final best two out of three face-off with Oklahoma.

Game one was a slugfest. The Rebels put up 16 hits, including back-to-back-to-back home runs in the eighth inning by T.J. McCants, Calvin Harris, and Justin Bench—a stunning feat not seen at the College World Series since 1998.

On the mound, the Ole Miss pitchers kept things quiet. Jack Dougherty, Mason Nichols, and Josh Mallitz gave up just three runs, securing a 10-to-3 victory.

The decisive game two was a lot closer. For the first five innings, it was a pitchers' duel between Ole Miss's Hunter Elliot of Tupelo, MS, and Cade Horton of Norman, OK. The bats finally got going for Ole Miss in the sixth when Jacob Gonzalez hit a solo home run. The Sooners quickly answered by knocking in two runs, making it 2 to 1, Oklahoma. In the eighth inning, Ole Miss tied things up with hits by T.J. McCants, Justin Bench, and Jacob Gonzalez, and scored two additional runs on wild pitches, making it 4 to 2.

In the top of the ninth, Brandon Johnson took the mound for Ole Miss and closed out the night with three strikeouts, capping off a magical run for the men from Oxford.

"From last team in, to last team standing," exclaimed the announcer.

And then to Oxford they returned, bringing with them the 30th NCAA championship in Ole Miss history.

The day after winning the title, these national champions were welcomed back to campus by crowds of jubilant supporters as they walked the hallowed pathway known as the Walk of Champions.

On behalf of the entire State of Mississippi, I commend the Ole Miss team and their staff on this historic achievement. Justin Bench, Calvin Harris, Kevin Graham, Kemp Alderman, and Dylan DeLucia all were named to the NCAA's All-Tournament Team.

Dylan DeLucia received the Jack Diesing, Sr. Most Outstanding Player of the Series award for pitching a complete game shutout against the Arkansas Razorbacks, becoming the first recipient of the award in Ole Miss history. And Captain Tim Elko became only the sixth player in history to earn four hits in a Men's College World Series final—not to mention his 46 career home runs, the second most in school history.

I also congratulate Mike Bianco, who has coached Ole Miss for 22 seasons and led the team to 18 playoff appearances,