

moment]; therefore it would have to be on-site.

[Both of the aforementioned are a waste of taxpayer dollars to subsidize and make pushes for. Instead of spending billions of dollars on a failing industry and something that is not going to last much longer, and one where so much has to be spent between construction, security, and pro-nuclear advertisements, I propose the following.]

(3) Invest in ever-growing renewable energy sources. There are many other players in this field that we can look to for examples, as they have found and harnessed extraordinary means that can provide for their base load energy needs. The amount of money that the government has spent on renewable energy pales drastically in contrast to the amount that is spent needlessly in a failing industry. If that same amount of money were to be applied to another for even but a year, you could expect even greater leaps and bounds in production and energy output. As conservative as Idaho is I propose that WE as a state pursue this choice. Yes I understand that in doing so Congress fears that it will lose backing from INL and other proposed plants within the state, not to mention the taxes that are brought in by such industry. Yet at the same time with as much as we have to give them in tax breaks and subsidies just as incentives places it on par with those of renewable energies, as those would be eager to establish and maintain plants without such things [therefore receiving full taxes from those companies].

I appreciate your efforts to ask the opinions of the citizens of this great state, and I hope and pray that you, as well as the rest of Congress, heed them. Thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER, *Boise.*

[I am very frustrated as it seems that Congress does not solve the problems that confront our country. We need new leadership.]
ROY.

The high gasoline prices have prodded me to change my driving habits and, by doing so, have saved on fuel costs. I have done one simple thing. I just slowed down 5 miles per hour. I drive a ¾-ton pickup truck, and that alone has increased my fuel mileage 8%–12%. I emailed you to suggest that you introduce a bill in the Senate to lower the speed limit on all interstate highways, just like what was done in the 70s. That alone would decrease gasoline usage substantially.

Thank you for your ear.

BOB.

I have had to dedicate 15% more of my budget to fuel costs [for my commute to McCall]. I try to carpool in the months where my schedule allows it. I work in fire dispatch on the Payette National Forest, and most days from April to October, I do not know when I am going home.

My deep belief is that digging for more oil is putting a “band-aid on a crack in the dam.” Digging for more oil, especially in the ANWR area, is horrific and not worth the long-term damage that will be done for such a short-term solution. I think the fuel cell technology is a very promising route to put into research and development. There are some stations in California that are wind and solar powered. As I understand it, the more people using it, the cheaper it gets. What would REALLY be ideal is to get a converter for gasoline cars to switch to the fuel cell technology.

Thanks for your time and caring about what I think!

CORAL, *New Meadows.*

I received your e-mail about the costs of energy going up and up. I see that conversa-

tion is now a priority. I remember when this administration laughed at the idea. Maybe you could tell us what percentage of the oil from Alaska goes overseas. Also, how much refined gas and diesel are shipped overseas where the cost and profit are much greater. In all your years in the Senate, what types of alternate energy other than ethanol have you supported? Everything I read leads me to believe than making corn-based ethanol uses about as much energy as is produced. There are other crops (such as sugar cane) and weeds that are much more energy-efficient to produce. [Why has Congress only focused on mandates for] corn-based ethanol?

Thank you for any response.

STEVE.

We own a small excavation business. We give our 22 employees paid vacation, medical insurance, and six paid holidays just to keep those good, trained employees, that we have been employing, most we have had for 12-27 years. Our industry in Boise right now is as close to the bottom of the barrel as we have seen in 30 years in business. We have had years where we struggled to keep those good employees and keep them working to support their families. But when fuel and heating costs are going out of control, skyrocketing as they are, we are second guessing whether we can stay doing what we love, and what we are good at. That would, in turn, take away the livelihoods of each and every employee we have and ourselves.

I am a woman-owned business, and in Idaho, they've even removed the requirement for large General Contractors to use a certain percentage of DBE or WBE's in their Federally-funded contracts. As of this year, there are no requirements to help the WBE or DBE and now most of the General Contractors are self-performing that work. So we small companies are being hit very hard from all directions. In order to recoup these costs we have had to raise our prices, which, in turn, hurts everyone else and does not help us in the bidding world, either. We have bid 60 projects in the past two months and got two very small jobs, and we have bid many with only a small percentage over our costs. Those receiving the bids are several hundreds and thousands under our costs. This cannot go on much longer before many of us are priced right out of the market and out of business. When you own dump trucks, excavators, backhoes, etc. that use diesel fuel, which happens to be the most expensive, it is staggering. Our fuel costs have tripled over two years.

On a personal level, we rethink how and where we go. Both my husband and I have no family here and must drive or fly to visit them. Those trips are cut to one a year and maybe not at all. I personally have always planned where I go to do grocery shopping and plan my trip so I do not backtrack, and use the best routes, utilizing the fuel to the best of my ability. Even though that helps, with prices as they are, it does not put a dent in it.

We definitely need help—getting these prices back to a livable level. Those individuals who are retired and on fixed incomes, which I am nearing in the next couple years, are even more critically hit. My parents are in their 80s and struggle all year, as they were born in the years where their Social Security payments are minimal and Congress decided would be too extensive to repair. My mother, who has worked since she graduated from college all those years ago and up until she was 75, receives \$300/month in Social Security. [That amount is not enough to live on.] With medicines they absolutely need to survive at their age, they are left with little or no money for fuel in their small budget. It is not only fuel for vehicles, but it is the fuel

for our homes and businesses as well. It is also the products we purchase. Pipe is a petroleum product and it is sky high right now. Like I said, it is hitting us from all levels and angles.

This is very brief, but I felt I must speak up. If we do not use our voices and sit back and do nothing, no one will hear or understand our plight.

Thanks for asking and I hope Congress will listen!

BETTY, *Boise.*

Forget the sob stories. Do something! If nothing takes place, [Congress should be prepared to hear from the grassroots throughout the country, those who need solutions, not more promises.]

LARRY and RITA.

I would like to see exploration into better public transport, and an emphasis on conservation before I'd like to see any of the other alternatives that you have proposed to deal with rising energy prices. I am fortunate to be one of those Idahoans (at least for now) who aren't feeling the pinch of rising energy prices. However, in a democracy, I believe that Americans deserve to have choices besides cars for their transportation needs. And, especially in a time of the increasing peril of climate change, I believe that having access to public transport and promoting conservation are critical in this conjuncture in time. I know that these ideas may not be popular, but if we are going to continue to survive as a species, we need to ask ourselves how much of a sacrifice we are willing to make. I have grown up in Idaho, and have left Idaho, but let me tell you (as I am sure you know), it is a special place, and we need to do all that we can to protect the beauty of this wonderful state.

Sincerely,

CARISSA, *McCall.*

I have a employee driving over 75 miles roundtrip from outside Caldwell, where housing is affordable, to Boise. She cares for a spouse in poor health. She asked about 4 ten-hour days. As a key employee in a small office, she needs to be here each day. Small business does not carry “fungible positions” where others can cover.

A second point in your letter did not reach the bottom line—Will you support drilling in ANWR and off the coast of Florida? I do, even if we merely “prove up the reserves”.

TOM.

We need to develop as many resources in this country and build new refineries. Thanks,

MIKE.

Not only has the price of gas affected what I pay at the pump, but I also work in automotive repair when people have to pay the higher prices. They drive less, which means they do not come into my shop, and when they do, they cannot pay to fix what they need.

LEON.

Please do not take the careless and short-sighted “solution” that you propose to this problem. Please do not drill for more oil and further damage this planet to the point of no return. We need smaller cars, public transportation, and alternative energy development. And [many Americans would benefit by more exercise like walking.]

BARBARA JANE, *Boise.*

My wife and I are on fixed income. We are retired at ages 69 and 66. The fuel costs have affected the cost to fly to the point that we