

Reserve natural gas for just home use. Do not allow it to be used to fire generators or any other plants. Reserve it for our future for our homes. There is plenty of coal for that.

You have got to figure out a way to override the liberals and their agendas. They will destroy us and the whole world.

VERA and BOB.

Senator, are you sure your figures are correct? \$50.00 per month more is not very much; it is only equivalent to one fill-up or less. . . .

My story is that I live near Gibbonsville, Idaho, 30 miles from the economically-depressed town of Salmon. Most of the inhabitants of the area are on a fixed income and the gas prices are crippling to the budget of many. I personally drive to town only once a week now to teach piano lessons and get groceries . . . I used to go more often and attend social events as well. My husband works outside of the area as there are few ways to make a living in this area. He drives 2 hours to the nearest airport in Missoula, Montana and then flies to his job, returning home every two weeks for 10 days. We know of many others who travel to work outside of this area for the same reason . . . no industry around here. My husband is considering only coming home once every six weeks now, a family hardship—or perhaps I will move away from the area and join him. The increased cost of traveling has shrunk his take home pay significantly. Obviously the huge increase in the cost of gas is a hardship to any one in this type of situation—and there are many, many people who travel to support their families.

Thanks for the chance to (hopefully) make a difference.

CHRISTINE, *Gibbonsville.*

It is time that all in the United States Senate and Congress got on board of the Drill Here, Drill Now Program. I hope that you are on board with this program.

Vic, *Gibbonsville.*

Gas prices affect almost every aspect of our lives. We usually take a few trips a year to Utah to visit family, but have limited ourselves to one this year. We will be sticking close to home. Things like driving a half-hour to Rexburg we used to not think anything about, but now we have to evaluate all of our activities to see if it is worth the gas money to participate. Raising young kids, it has been a priority for me to stay home with them, but we are wondering if it will always be possible with the rising cost of living. Please do what you can to keep costs down!

Sincerely,

JULIE, *Ammon.*

The high energy prices are choking me!! Your liberal colleagues are helping destroy our great nation!! All kinds of oil available from our close neighbors like Canada and Mexico!! Your friends in Washington, D.C. are wearing blinders!! No new plants have been built in 24 years!! How can you buck such stupidity? Good luck!

JAMES.

We are retired and energy costs are a big item. A clear majority of the American people approve of drilling in ANWR, off-shore, oil shale, gasification from coal . . . all now! Other countries like Norway, Brazil, Africa are going to think twice about selling us oil when we won't drill for our own reserves! Obviously nuclear, wind, water, etc., are important but it has to be all of these efforts not a choice of one or the other. Right now, we should start drilling . . . Do not underesti-

mate the frustration of the voters with Congress.

Thanks for listening.

BOB and JANE, *Hayden.*

We live in rural Gooding, Idaho. We are 35 miles from the nearest department stores. My husband is an insurance agent and has to travel to inspect the homes he insures and to service all of his clients. We also build one or two homes a year in a family partnership to help our children earn money for college. Our children go to a university that is 250 miles away. Our married children live 150-200 miles away. Driving long distances is a necessity and public transportation is not an option. We would not use it if we had it. We have to have our vehicles for our work. The "city dwellers" in Congress apparently have no idea how much we depend on and need our trucks and cars. We need our lawmakers and the environmentalists to get out of the way and let the big oil companies do what they do best, drill for and refine oil. In the midst of the presidential debates of the recent months, we hear a lot of empty rhetoric coming from Washington and elsewhere. I want to hear from the realists who believe in the phrase I have been hearing on Talk Radio: "Drill here, drill now, pay less." I want my \$2 a gallon (or less) gasoline back and I do not want to hear that it is not possible. It is possible, and we want the Senate and House to get some guts and tell the environmentalist whackos that we are all done playing their games! Conservation is not the answer. Alternative fuels are not the answer. More domestic production is the answer. I am just an average citizen and I know what needs done. What ever happened to common sense?

Thanks for asking for my opinion. Not that it will do any good, but I had to try.

DEBY, *Gooding.*

We are just your "average" Idaho family. Mom and Dad both work and we have four children. We used to have a few dollars left after bills every month to just barely take care of the extra things that pop up—scout camp, new shoes for the kids, medical bills, a birthday gift . . . That is not the case anymore. Not only do we spend more a month on gasoline, we are also spending more on groceries and household items because prices on those have also increased due to energy cost increases. I used to be able to feed my family on a certain budget amount every month. Now, we are dipping into other budgets just to put enough food on the table. The "other budgets" are monies we used to use to pay medical bills and other expenses. One can imagine what is happening to those items and obligations now.

We have planted a huge garden in hopes of using it to help take the edge off some of our grocery expenses but that won't take care of everything. Children need shoes. Medical bills have to get paid. You cannot buy shoes or pay bills with veggies from your garden. We live too far away from our jobs to ride bikes and one of us works until midnight, making it unsafe to ride a bike home anyway.

We just keep hoping that our government will see that the "average" family is suffering and that they will do something about it. Perhaps nothing will get done until it hits their homes as hard as it has hit the "average" family. Sad commentary on the state of things in America though, because there are more "average" families out there than there are wealthy families and/or those who are benefiting from the high oil prices. So, more people are suffering than are not and it does not feel like our government cares. Something can and must be done.

When it is said that families are suffering, that means children are suffering—and chil-

dren should not be made to suffer because of someone else's greed.

GAYLE, *Ammon.*

My husband and I are fearful of how rising oil prices will affect our family and all those around us. If it was just an increase in our personal gasoline usage we might be able to get by. However, it goes so far beyond that, affecting the cost of everything else used in our lives. We already see food prices going up, and expect to see everything else follow suit. Most families like ours are on a tight budget and have started to look at what to give up to continue to pay all the bills. We now wonder if prices continue to climb much further if it will cost us the eventual loss of our home to foreclosure.

We see the domino effect on how oil prices touch most aspects of our lives. When everyone starts cutting back, so will the need for as many employees. Thus, will high prices and high unemployment lead us into another depression? Is the United States of America, as the world leader in strength and independence, a thing of the past? Will our children grow up, like so many in other countries, longing to leave and seek residence elsewhere? We fear the feeling of hopelessness and it is spread throughout our nation. Is it too late?

We will continue to pray for our government and the decisions it makes. Thank you for your time.

BARBARA, *Emmett.*

As you know the price of everything has risen because of the tremendous cost of transportation. Those of us on a "fixed" income are really suffering. Let us utilize our own oil fields. Bring our troops home; this will decrease our need for oil . . . Our tax money is needed at home! Thank you for your time.

RODGER, *Lewiston.*

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING THE MAINE STATE MUSIC THEATRE

● Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I congratulate the Maine State Music Theatre on its 50th anniversary season and commend them for their continued commitment to high-quality artistic productions.

The Maine State Music Theatre is one of the few resident stock theater companies dedicated strictly to musical theater. It provides professional musical productions not only for Maine residents but also for hundreds of summer residents who benefit the Maine economy each year. That is one of the reasons that I was pleased to be able to secure \$245,000 in Federal funding last year for their continued efforts to develop their facilities.

I remain an ardent supporter of the Maine State Music Theatre. I send my best wishes as the theatre celebrates its 50th year of presenting musical production and wish all involved an equally successful next 50 years.●

REMEMBERING FRANK STROUD

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to honor a man we recently lost—a remarkable individual full of warmth and generous of spirit.