

take a vacation and to keep our home because of high gasoline, electricity, and natural gas costs. Food costs us much more, too.

But we are taking action ourselves to reduce the costs and contribute helping solve the larger question about global warming and what we are doing to our own environment. We bought a hybrid car to reduce gas consumption. We bicycle to work. We turn off lights when we leave the room. We turn down the temperature of our water heater. We contribute to our utilities green energy program. We recycle, reuse, and restore. We invest in only green energy and companies that are forwarding a future that is not dependent on fossil fuels and that gives back to the people and resources they depend on. And we buy only food that is grown in as sustainable way as possible to support the best farmers and the practices they use. We support farmers who are stewards of the land.

And I know high fuel prices are making Americans use less gas, drive less, and think more before they get in the car and take a trip. The same is happening all across America, even previously unresponsive corporations like Walmart and Chevrolet and Ford and General Motors are taking actions to curb fuel costs, use less fuel, make more efficient cars, and save energy because the rising prices and changing energy markets affect their bottom line. The only ones who are not taking any action are those who are making a profit from high energy prices.

The fact is, changes in the world of energy prices and changes in our perspective on how humans are affecting the environment we live in are changing too. And people are taking action rather than wait for our unresponsive and partisan public officials to do something.

If you do anything or want to take any action, promote energy conservation in any and all ways and renewable energy production in all its forms. Under no circumstances should we further exploit the fossil fuel resources this country has. We will need them in the long term so they are investment in our future and best kept where they are and their exploitation now would only speed the further decline of this country and our global environment.

If you want to promote nuclear energy, then any proposal and supporter of such a bill should also volunteer their land and the land of their family for the storage of nuclear waste (the Idaho National Lab does not count). . . Or such proponents should volunteer to move next to the site that will store such waste. If you or anyone else can pass that red face test, then I would support moving ahead with such legislation.

I think, first and foremost, you should pass a cap and trade bill on carbon. It is the only way in which we can develop a viable economy and take advantage of the new opportunities offered by the challenges of energy in the future and preserve the planet in which we live.

I also think that the profits being afforded to energy companies as a result of increasing costs to citizens should be taxed. No one wants to remove corporate profits but record profits and changes in markets to provide for this are opportunities for providing funding for new and important initiatives without undue loss of corporate profitability or returns on investments to shareholders.

The "problem" with America is that we do not want to sacrifice our future for the short term economic gain of a few short years and the short term political gains one party or the other can make. We are not like China in that way and if we stoop to competing with them at that level, we not only destroy the environment but lose our values and what we stand for. This has been the approach of the current administration and its party and it

is something we need to excrete out of our system as soon as possible so that we can once again embrace the democratic principles and public trusts this country was founded on.

I wish you luck and I hope you can see your way to what needs to be done. We all will be doing what we can out here, in the land of the free and home of the brave.

Respectfully,

GREGG.

I work at the site and drive 100 miles roundtrip. Our union per diem has not [increased] in years to stay current with the outrageous gas prices. It has also affected my being able to go to Island Park to the lot my parents bought in 1970 and has since been willed to me. I used to make weekend trips every week but cannot even afford to buy gas to pull the trailer up to the lot, let alone pull the boat up and buy gas for it. I am the Job Supervisor for Construction on the Tank Farm Closure Project and have received several recognition awards for my work and just won the Eagle Award for the Tank Farm. Maybe I can sell them and get money for gas to continue going to work. We need to build Generation IV reactors and start getting our own oil and not depend on foreign countries that can't stand us to begin with.

LARRY, *Blackfoot*.

Like many Americans, my husband and I have tried to support the American economy by buying U.S. branded products; but as we are getting to within seven years of retirement we need to make our retirement savings a top priority. We calculated the cost of owning our Ford vehicles and compared them to the overall cost of a Toyota Prius using \$3.20 a gallon gas cost. The Prius won by a nose, so we bought one last year. This year we traded in our last Ford for another Prius. We have been able to keep our retirement savings at the same level because of these purchases. This, of course, means we can no longer haul the larger loads or go into the back country on the unimproved roads like we did before the cost of gas became unreasonable. We have made accommodations; but the changes have limited our recreation choices. These are minor issues compared to the families who cannot make these changes because they have mortgages that are now close to the value of the property due to the falling real estate market and their other costs have risen with the price of gas. These people are being squeezed from all sides.

KATHLEEN.

[Thank you for not passing the climate change bill] that was one of the stupidest bills I have seen. It is no wonder the approval rating is so low. Keep up the good work—and keep those [other Members] in line—It will take some time, but they will be out [of office soon].

UNSIGNED.

We have seen the prices of not only gas, but groceries, going up and up. Because we need to continue to buy gas in order to keep doctors' appointments, get our son to work, go to church and the grocery store, etc., we have had to purchase less food. The fruits and vegetables are now priced so high, we are unable to include them in our diet. As you know, these are essential for our health! We live on Social Security—and that does not go up! It is becoming more and more of a struggle just to pay our utilities, prescriptions, and insurances. We would love to be able to drive out of state to visit our children, but cannot afford to drive that far. On top of all of that, our property taxes are going up! We pay our bills, then wonder just what we will eat for our next meals! It is almost to the

point that one of us (both in our 70s) will have to find a job.

Thanks for listening to people like us.

KAROL, *Nampa*.

We need to look for alternative fuel. Perhaps now since it is hitting our pocket books we will be more willing. Please stay out of the environmentally-sensitive areas; no need to destroy our environment for short term gain.

Thank You,

ASA.

I was retired and had to go back to work due to the higher energy prices and increases in the cost of food.

ALBERT.

While you sit high and mighty in your posh and air-conditioned jobs, listen in on how two teachers in Idaho have to get by so we can pay our taxes to pay your well-padded salaries. . .

Both my wife and I are State Certified Teachers. Both of us are highly-educated (myself with a Master's in Education from University of Idaho and my wife with a Bachelor's in Special Education from Boise State University). Neither of us can find jobs teaching here in the Treasure Valley because school districts are cutting FTE's in order to spread their already overly-inflated budgets in multiple directions. We have a baby on the way with no medical insurance and no way to qualify for aid as we are considered too wealthy, because we both were teaching last year.

Life is getting interesting for us as we have cut all of our spending in our budgets to buy gas for our little VW bug. We no longer can afford to drive to the movies, as that is gas we need to look for work. We no longer spend money on luxury items, as that is money set aside to buy gas to get to work. We no longer eat out, as all restaurants are rising their prices in order to keep up with their own costs. That is also money we need for gas to get back and forth to work. We work to feed the car now, not each other. We eat Top Ramen, macaroni & cheese, and salads (fine, yes, but it gets old after a while), because we can no longer afford to eat the healthier foods because all of the stores have raised those prices to just outside of our reach. For us, it is now about survival . . . not living.

You politicians need to understand just whose money you are spending when you schedule your flights and eat your meals and then bill it to the people. You need to look at your own waistlines and paychecks and consider taking a pay-cut like we do. You are not there to get rich! You are not there to build your career! You are there to represent us! That is it!

Consider cutting your own spending by brown bagging lunch from your own home budgets and kitchens, instead of ordering and charging it as a tax write-off. Consider video conferencing more often instead of bouncing back and forth across the nation in an airplane for your meetings. Conference call like the rest of us! Ride a bike when you can or a motorcycle or scooter and become the leading example you originally set out to be!

Please understand, from where we are you are an unnecessary expense on our taxes. If the government cannot afford to pay its bills, it should stop spending! Not raise more revenue by raising more taxes.

We the People are looking at a government out of control. As stated in the Declaration of Independence:

" . . . that to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from those governed,—That