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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**The Evolution of Talking and Listening**  
**by Senator Larry Craig**

I'll be the first to admit that I'm not always up on the latest technologies. I do try to keep myself informed as much as possible, but it seems that every time I visit with my grandchildren, I learn about some new gadget, game, or craze that is sweeping the nation.

Young people have an amazing capacity to adopt new concepts and technologies and apply them to everyday life. Rather than shy away and lose out on the advance of science, however, we adults and seniors can take full advantage of new technologies too. In fact, taking on new challenges and new experiences can be a great way to keep the mind sharp as we age. In this spirit, I have been evaluating, over the last year or two, the way I interact with Idahoans. I have been looking for new ways to reach you, while at the same time seeking to present you with new ways to reach me.

While it isn't necessarily new, my website (<http://craig.senate.gov>) is constantly changing, growing, and transforming to meet the communications needs of Idahoans. If you haven't visited it in a while, I'd encourage you to stop by once again. There is a wealth of information about what's going on in Washington, D.C.; my stances on important issues of the day; where my regional offices are in the state and how to contact them; how to send me correspondence, ask me questions or let me know your thoughts or concerns; how to submit applications for internships, the page program or academy nominations; and much more.

Would you like to receive bi-weekly updates in your email about what I've been doing in the Senate for Idaho? Then "eNEWS" may be the thing for you. Do you listen to audio files on your iPod or some other MP3 player? Whenever possible, my staff and I collect audio and video recordings from Congressional hearings, floor speeches, or even press interviews. I post these files on my website and often "podcast" – an iPod broadcast – them too.

The Washington Report is a short program produced for television that is also available through my website or through podcasting. I've even combined podcasting with online chat sessions to create a "podchat." In a podchat, I take questions submitted via my website and answer them in a podcast, so listeners can get the answers straight from me.

One extra benefit of all these new methods of communication is that they are all very efficient ways to save taxpayer dollars. For example, eNEWS is sent to more than 60,000 subscribers across Idaho. To send eNEWS through the traditional mail system would take 60,000 stamps, at 39 cents

**[MORE]**

## **CRAIG Page 2 – The Evolution of Talking and Listening**

apiece, every two weeks. That works out to \$608,400 per year, not counting printing and labor costs. Producing and distributing eNEWS with computers and email costs just a small fraction of that.

Having said all that, I don't want anyone to feel that they must be on the cutting edge of technology in order to share their thoughts or request information and assistance. While all these newfangled programs are indeed convenient and exciting, I still appreciate a handwritten letter, a phone call or a face-to-face meeting as much as anything. In fact, I have continued to travel the state as much as possible and see you in your towns, schools, homes and places of work. In the last six months, I've held town hall meetings in Idaho Falls, Twin Falls, Jerome, Mountain Home, Meridian, McCall, Boise, Lewiston and Coeur d'Alene.

I'm always looking for effective ways to communicate with Idahoans and for Idahoans to communicate with me. This helps me provide timely, high-quality constituent service, increase opportunities and incentives for citizen involvement in the political and legislative process, and most important, always remain in touch with Idaho.