

gas prices, but then their governments do not provide tax incentives for people to buy SUVs and 1-ton trucks to go shopping in. Maybe there is no SUV or 1-ton truck lobby over there.

Here is MY crisis—if you are interested: I am paying \$1,293 per month for medical insurance for my wife and myself. That is a heck of a lot more than your \$200 “crisis.” That takes care of about all of my company pension (after 30 years of employment).

For that \$200 in gas I can escape to McCall or Stanley for a weekend. That \$1,293 medical insurance does not even offer me peace of mind, as I struggle each month to justify the payment.

Obviously—your crisis is not my crisis—and vice versa.

OLE, Boise.

This fuel problem is, of course, hard on us all. But the young families trying to make ends meet by working two jobs and still cannot meet the student's needs, and cannot get any to help because they do not fall into the right bracket to receive stamps or whatever, free children's lunches, even. The real people are the ones who are hurting. Yes, something has got to give. Bless you for caring.

MARY.

The bottom line solution to our energy crisis is to dramatically reduce our dependence on fossil fuel as quickly as possible, especially foreign oil. Sooner or later that supply is going to be history.

The big question is what can we do now? I can think of several ideas: (1) Allow oil drilling in the U.S. in those areas currently restricted by environmental law. (2) Create monetary incentives for auto manufacturers who offer non-fossil fuel vehicles for sale and also incentives for those who buy them. (3) Encourage the use of nuclear energy to generate electrical energy, both for home and domestic use. (4) To help pay for some of this, apply a healthy surcharge on every gallon of foreign oil that comes into the U.S. And finally (5) continue to help educate our U.S. public in new and better ways to cope with high energy costs.

None of this will come quick or easy, but something has to be done now to keep from destroying our U.S. economy and existence.

Thank you.

DAVE AND HELEN, Meridian.

I totally disagree with your statement in the first paragraph that reads:

“The driving distances between places in our state as well as limited public transportation options mean that many of us do not have any choice but to keep driving and paying those ever-increasing prices for fuel. The United States is too dependent on petroleum for our energy. And we are far too dependent on foreign sources of that petroleum. We urgently need to expand our own domestic production of petroleum and need to significantly diversify our energy sources.”

More emphasis should be placed by Congress (including you) on forcing the three domestic automobile manufacturers to increase the mileage cars and trucks get and phase out production of gas-guzzling SUVs, while increasing the production levels of hybrid cars similar to the ones Toyota and Honda make. Instead of coming up with new ideas you advocate continuing the status quo, which is to allow auto manufacturers to save money on the research necessary to come up with cars that have leading-edge technology, like the Toyota Prius. No wonder American car makers are losing billions of dollars and are now behind Toyota in cars sold. Next thing we taxpayers will probably have to do is to bail these companies out, just as we did with Chrysler in the early 1980s.

ROBERT, Boise.

DEAR SENATOR CRAPO, While there is no short term fix for escalating energy prices, I believe there are a few things that we can do to ensure the United States of America will have viable energy for the future.

(1) Speculative Impact on Oil—Taxing the oil companies into oblivion is not the answer, but the methods that are used to trade oil contracts can be changed. Since oil speculators only need to put 4 percent—7 percent down on an oil contract, there are too many speculators in the market that have no intention of ever taking delivery of a drop of oil. Raising the down payment to be comparable to the stock market (50 percent down payment) will take out the investors “dabbling” in oil. Let us do the math on this: If I took \$40,000 of my own money, I could buy one million dollars worth of oil contracts that I would have no intention of ever taking delivery of. Removing oil contracts such as these from the market would give us a better idea of true supply/demand ratio really is.

(1a) The Fed needs to do what is necessary to increase the value of the dollar. A stronger dollar slows down speculative buying of oil, causing the price to drop.

(2) Import tariff on ethanol. While we do not want to be dependent on yet another imported fuel, this would remove some of the pressure on food prices due to demand for corn. Corn is so important to our society that most people do not grasp the impact it has on many areas of the economy. Everything from carbonated drinks, dog food, meat, etc. depend on corn in one way or another and also raises the prices for other crops because less of these other crops are being planted in favor of corn. Now take that price increase, and add the effect of the flooding this year and we are looking at a recipe for rampant inflation. Since Idaho farmers produce a large amount of sugar from sugar beets, maybe helping them build some plants to turn that sugar into ethanol is a viable option.

(3) Other energy sources. We cannot continue to count on oil as our primary source for energy. The Federal Government has known for years that we can get biodiesel from ALGAE! ([http://www.unh.edu/p2/biodiesel/article\\_algae.html](http://www.unh.edu/p2/biodiesel/article_algae.html) cites many government sources) We cannot afford to not provide funds for more research and development in this field. Clean nuclear energy—we need to do whatever we can to be able to take spent nuclear fuel and regenerate it, thus having less nuclear waste going into the ground. If the French can do this, there should be nothing in our way to prevent us for doing it—even if it means renegotiating nuclear proliferation treaties. We also need to invest more into research and development of solar and wind power. We also need to overturn drilling bans that are in place in places such as the coasts of California and Florida. We also cannot deny that this country needs more refining capacity, and we need to come up with a way to help companies cut the red tape and build more refinery capacity.

(4) FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REGULATION—The rules imposed by the EPA have impacted our ability to have higher mile per gallon vehicles. Tighter emission laws always results in a decrease in fuel economy. If engines put out less emissions in emissions tests, is that negated by them consuming more fuel over several years? For example, the change from low sulfur diesel (500 ppm sulfur) to Ultra low sulfur diesel (50 ppm) caused diesels to lose about 2 percent economy and some of the older engines have problems with the new diesel eating through seals. Having regulations more like Europe (separate policies for gasoline engines vs. diesel engines) would also help. Due to the current EPA regulation, nobody can import

the clean diesels from Europe such as the Volkswagen Polo—which with the diesel engine gets 72 mpg. Hybrid vehicles cannot touch this kind of fuel economy. Just think how many gallons of fuel would be saved by cars like this, then think about how many more gallons of fuel would be saved if this vehicle used biodiesel!

As for how it affects my life: I had already reduced my driving after diesel hit \$3/gallon, and now I have reduced it even more. I canceled plans to visit family in North Idaho for the Memorial Day Weekend (I live in Boise), and about the only driving I do is to/from work (5 miles each way), and necessary errands such as the grocery store. I also end up hunting much less than I would like, and if the price continues to climb, I may not hunt at all. If more people like me do not hunt, then the Idaho Fish and Game department will have huge funding shortfalls which, in my opinion, jeopardizes the future of wildlife conservation in our state. I also have cut down on spending of all other types, whether it is eating out or not buying consumer goods.

There is not an instant solution to the energy crisis, but some of the things above will help in the short term. We need to focus on the long term energy policy not only to cause prices to normalize, but to prevent economy-killing price hikes like we are seeing now.

ALAN, Boise.

We are 70 years old and active seniors on a fixed income. Energy costs are becoming a burden for us and will begin to go into our reserves for future years. Gas prices are obviously a problem but the cost of groceries is also a big item. We have one car and my husband rides a bicycle as much as possible. I walk to places when destinations are close enough. We are concerned about being good stewards of our environment and do what we can, e.g., recycling, using less gas, using fans instead of an air conditioner when practical, raising some of our own food, planting trees on our property, and conserving water.

We are disgusted that we are the victims of bogus global warming fanatics, environmentalists, and opportunists. Ethanol, which has not been proven to be efficient or good for engines, is using up corn that was used for food and livestock feed thus raising food costs. We have oil reserves in our own soil that could be used. There are other countries drilling off our shores so why cannot we since this would not create any more risk than is already present?

ALLEN AND JANE, Nampa.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF CHURCHS FERRY, NORTH DAKOTA

● Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am pleased to honor a community in North Dakota that recently celebrated its 125th anniversary. On June 27 through June 29, the residents of Churchs Ferry celebrated their community's history and founding.

This Great Northern Rail Road town site was founded in 1886 and named for the ferry service operated by Irvine A. Church. Mr. Church moved his Church post office to the town on November 13, 1886, adopting the new name. To conform to new government spelling regulations the name was changed to Churchs Ferry on November 30, 1894.

Although its population is small, Churchs Ferry serves as a testament to