

touching. To respect their efforts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through energy_prices@crapo.senate.gov to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Like many other single parents out there, we have to commute to work for better-paying jobs and cannot take public transportation because they won't stop at daycare and the store on the way home from work. So, yes, like every family, whether single or not, you have to drive and cannot ride your bike, but give me a break. And tell me why the airlines are now charging a \$75 escort fee for your child under 12 flying alone (it was \$30 last year), and this is to walk them from the counter to the plane. Tell me how much gas does that use? And their reason for increased cost is the fuel prices. So that is \$150 round trip to walk from the counter to the plane on top of the airline charge. What is going to be the next excuse—charging to use the restroom during the flight?

I seriously believe this is going to extremely out of hand before it gets any better. And is anyone going to do anything about all of this? I do not think so!!!

Thank you,

TRACY, Star.

Dear Senator Crapo, When gas hit \$2 a gallon, my husband and I agreed that neither of us expected the price to ever go below \$2 and that the price would continue to increase because of increased demand from China and India and the Iraq war. In 2006, we traded in a mid-80s Saturn and bought a Toyota Prius because of its gas mileage. As the price of gas continued to increase, my husband bought a scooter to commute to work whenever the weather is dry. The scooter gets 90+ miles to the gallon. Being a stay-at-home mom for a while with our daughter, I consolidate errands into a single trip whenever I can and handle as many things as I can over the telephone. Gas is now over \$4 a gallon (. . . diesel is almost \$5!), but everyday I still see huge shiny pickup trucks and SUVs driven by solo drivers commuting to work.

Would I like gas to be cheaper? Sure, but it is not reasonable to expect that it is going to happen any time soon. Domestic oil reserves cannot be developed quickly enough for us to seriously depend on that strategy. We must reduce demand and become more efficient.

Our grandparents and parents supported the war effort by reducing their personal consumption of oil, metal, clothing and food (among other items). Why do our leaders (you!) insist that citizens are unable to rise to the occasion and change our consumption?

Do I support destroying the Alaskan wilderness so my fellow Idahoans can commute in SUV's? No!

Do I support fighting wars over oil so we can go water skiing and speed boating at Lucky Peak? No!

Do I support subsidizing and coddling the American car industry which has stubbornly refused to offer fuel efficient cars? No!

If Boise had a light rail system, would we use it to visit family and run errands in Meridian, Nampa and Caldwell? You bet!

Senator Crapo, please be a leader who does not ask citizens to wallow in anger and pity. Establish your leadership and vision around responsible use and investment in the future!

Best regards,

KIMBERLY, Boise.

Dear Mr. Crapo: Thank you so much for trying to fight this battle for us. I do not think there is a family in the U.S. that is not being affected by our high fuel costs. For many of us, we have long considered our fuel as a necessity but with the prices we now are paying, it is becoming a luxury!

My husband and I are getting close to retirement, so we have been trying to plan and save for that time. With these fuel charges, I will have to reduce my 401K payments because I drive 25 miles to work each day. Sure, I could try and buy a smaller car to reduce my fuel bill, but my car is fairly new and paid for and it does not seem economically feasible to trade it in and start making payments on a smaller car.

No, we won't go without food or shelter, but we will be tightening our belts on other aspects of our lives. Our Saturday drives, date nights, and trips to visit our grandkids will be greatly reduced. These are the things that we have worked hard to achieve and enjoy and now will not be able to do so.

I greatly encourage our country to begin using our own resources. Domestic drilling and refining is the answer. Sure, I care about the environment and harming wildlife, but I care more about the human aspect of this crisis. Our human way life has become harmed. Why aren't the environmentalists worrying about that? With technology what it is today, there are fewer chances of oil spills or environmental issues. I also know that, with our technology, it will not take eight to ten years to get this oil into production. I think we need to begin drilling in ANWR and off the coast of California immediately.

As a citizen I will do my part to help with energy conservation but I also expect our legislatures to step up and do their part and stop being controlled by special interest environmentalists.

Thank you once again for your efforts.

JEANNETTE, Idaho Falls.

As seniors on a pension and Social Security, I think we are among the hardest hit. I think it is criminal that neither energy nor food is included in the COLA. It is going to be a long time before these prices come down and I think it is time the COLA is based on something a little more realistic. We cannot live without either one of these items. Also living in rural Idaho, we do not have any public transportation. I truly think the government would just as soon that we would all die off so they do not have to deal with us.

DONNA.

Dear Senator Mike Crapo: If you really care about one of the most crippling economic problems facing our nation, it is the impact of the greed of the oil industry infrastructure.

The racketeering (oh, well, what else should I call it?) of the oil industry is having massive inflationary impact on this nation, severely damaging this nation's transportation system. The ripple effects will be far-reaching and crippling over the long term. Damage to the transportation infrastructure with loss of service through airline cutbacks, will have long term impact on the entire travel industry, in turn impacting the entire economy. Fewer flights and fewer airline routes (and bankrupt carriers) require less

airplanes, impacting aircraft production (loss of airplane orders and jobs at Boeing), resulting in fewer jobs, and fewer hours worked. Resultant higher ticket prices make discretionary travel (vacations) less affordable impacting hotels, motels, theme parks, rental cars, etc. Look further still and it not hard to visualize the massive ripple: less hotel and motel supplies purchased, restaurant food, new automobiles for the rental car industry, etc.

The airline industry, trucking, farming, plastics (and other products reliant on petrochemicals) and food production are all suffering from the unchecked corporate oil industry greed. Greed that only promises to worsen, as the oil industry blackmails us with obvious threat of higher prices without access to protected areas for drilling. Yet they actually do nothing too relieve the bottlenecks nor improve their existing production infrastructure. Nor is it a short term solution. They claim investment, in what, additional tracts of land to grow their holdings, and exploration, to lock in future production, but provide no meaningful major expenditure that has improved current production that is of benefit to the American consumer. When was the last new refinery opened, or the old existing infrastructure modernized, unless required by regulation, or replacement due to industrial accident or breakdown? The number of competitors has shrunk thru buyouts and mergers over the years, serving to destroy the competitive market, and pricing at the pump, is nothing short of collusion, thinly veiled as competitive free market pricing. And the oil industry gets wiser on how to game the congress and the people. And you sit still for it!

We need very badly the long term solutions you speak of, however, we need action now with a high priority placed on bringing a cessation to the greed based damage to this nation's economy and the severe economic burden being endured by the voters you elected officials collectively represent.

If it is bad now, think of the winter heating bill citizens in the nation's cold climate will shortly face when winter is once again upon us.

So vital is this industry to our nation's economy, it is past time to regulate it! I repeat, it is past time to regulate the oil industry!

Our government regulates electricity, natural gas, and telephone infrastructure, and the FCC TV & radio. How is the oil industry any different? How is the oil dependency/infrastructure of this nation less vital? They are no longer serving this nation's interest in a responsible manner, have made a complete mockery of congressional investigations (with the aid of some members of congress), and basically have the United States of America over a barrel!

A good place to start would be to make speculation illegal (dealing through third party brokers & traders illegal. If a person/company does not actually physically handle the actual product, it should be made illegal to profit from it by brokering or speculation.).

How many airlines have to fold, how many truckers go under, and how much unnecessary inflation must this nation endure before our elected (for now) officials really do something meaningful? It is said oil is higher due to the shrinking dollar. Oil has driven the dollar down and is a major player in our current inflation. It impacts the United States, it ripples thru the world.

Have you asked yourselves why the voters think less of our elected officials (per polls) than our President? Are you really happy with that?

Your email implies you care. Then prove it to the voters you represent. Start the Congress on a path to put control and regulation