

I wish you the best in your retirement and commend you on your career. Encourage your grandchildren to follow a new path.

TOM.

As a travel writer and photographer, I am usually on the go much of the time. It used to be nothing to travel a day or two by car to go do a story somewhere for one of the many magazines I write for. But now, due to the high cost of gasoline, I've got to really look at the distances I have to travel because of the high cost of gasoline. There are story opportunities I have to turn down not because of the distance itself, but because of the cost of gasoline to cover that distance.

I am retired, so it is not about making a lot of money. If my travel costs are less than what I'll be paid for the articles and photography, I'll usually go do the story. It has been like I'm always on vacation. But now, the travel costs are becoming so expensive it's becoming harder every day to except assignments that require extensive driving to destinations to do the articles. My happy style of travel and retirement are coming to a fast close because of gas prices.

My dream when I retired in 1998 was to see as much of the United States as possible and be on the road exploring the unique places I never got around to while I was working. I thought I might even do a book like John Steinbeck did, "Travels With Charlie", and illustrate it with my photography from around the United States. Well, that is down the tubes as well.

Whenever I leave the house to go somewhere, I have to make sure that I get three or four things done on the trip so as not to waste gas. It has become a real struggle. I feel sorry for the people that have to drive far every day to go to work, it has got to be knocking them for a loop with the price of gas what it is.

JERRY.

I think we desperately need an energy policy that will utilize our own proven oil and gas reserves. I blame congress in part for the current high energy prices due their continually politicizing the adoption of a workable national energy policy.

MEL, Boise.

I live in Ashton, Idaho, and drive to Idaho Falls to teach at Idaho State University, so the cost of gas matters. Yet, I also welcome the high costs of gasoline if it forces us to an awareness of how destructive burning fossil fuels is and forces us to change. I absolutely oppose more production of fossil fuels, and urge you to take alternative energy sources seriously: wind, solar, and support these with the kind of subsidies you so easily give to agriculture. Above all, it is time to do something about public transportation, especially the restoration of rail services to rural areas, or support for connecting Idaho to Portland/Denver. Give Idaho transportation alternatives, rather than working within the same addiction to automobiles and fossil fuels. My "story" is outrage that government has given so little thought to alternatives.

DARRELL.

DEAR SENATOR CRAPO, I strongly believe our efforts to address these energy costs should be concentrated on getting more use out of clean, renewable energy that is already available. Most of us could go a great deal further in our energy conservation efforts; incentives might help. There is already a great deal available in wind and solar energy, I think that with incentives to utilize them and research money directed at improving them we can start to establish a sustainable energy usage for the long term.

Increasing drilling in the United States will at most give us a few years of additional oil, if that, at the cost of possibly despoiling a beautiful natural zone and damaging critical bird nesting habitat.

Increasing our use of nuclear power when we still have not figured out a safe means of dealing with the waste is similarly irresponsible over the long term.

I too have felt the high energy prices, but I do not think they should be used as an excuse to increase our efforts in a failed direction that is causing severe damage to the global environment. It is time that we stop and consider how we can move our energy policy in a different direction for our long-term health.

ARIA, Moscow.

I am a substitute teacher for School District #331 in Minidoka County. I have been subbing for 13 years and, until this last year, I worked mostly full days but the occasional half day for teachers who, for various reasons, didn't need to be gone all day. I will no longer go in for half days because it is not economically feasible. We, as subs, are not paid well anyway, and to only get half pay, with gas prices like they are, is not possible anymore. I substitute at the secondary level and there are two schools in Rupert that I work at regularly, Minico High School is about ten minutes away and West Minico Middle School is 20 minutes away. I do not go to Minico or West much any more because of high gas prices. I think we really need to "drill here, drill now" because something has got to give. Our wages are not going up! Thank you for caring. . . .

PATTY, Rupert.

We continue to build our economy on oil yet we can not produce enough oil in this country for energy independence. It wouldn't matter if we could, because we are capitalist. We would just sell the oil on the global market.

We need to look at our current natural resource and use them to our advantage. Brazil switched to sugarcane ethanol, but corn is not the answer to the United States. Our natural resource is coal and natural gas. We should concentrate on making coal cleaner and switch our economy to electricity powered by coal, hydro, nuclear, and wind (most likely in that order). That is energy independence. Quit fighting for something that doesn't exist.

BRENT, Boise.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPHINE LONG

• Mr. DODD. Madam President, today I honor the career of Josephine Long, a wonderful woman and extraordinary teacher. Ms. Long has worked in the District of Columbia Public School System for 33 years, touching the lives of hundreds of children. Ms. Long was born in Raleigh, NC, and moved to Washington, DC, as a child. She has lived here ever since, raising two daughters and two sons. Ms. Long received certification in early childhood education from both Gallaudet University and Prince George's Community College. Since then, Ms. Long has had a positive impact in many classrooms, working for the majority of her career with special needs children and for the past 2 years at the School-Within-School at Peabody, a DC public school.

Colleagues have long admired Ms. Long for her optimistic attitude and the special concern and attention she gave to her students with special health concerns. Perhaps Ms. Long's most impressive strength as a teacher was the respect she showed her students; she spoke to them and treated them with maturity, sharing her life experiences, recounting daily encounters, and listening intently when they shared their thoughts as well. Ms. Long made her students laugh and was always generous; every day, she shared her lunch cookies among 22 different students.

As both a father and the chair of the Senate Subcommittee on Children and Families, I know very well the importance of a quality education. While many factors contribute to the success of our schools, perhaps none can make more of a difference than a teacher with the ability to connect with her students. Ms. Long did just that for more than 30 years, and I commend her for her dedication to the District of Columbia Public School System. On behalf of all the students she has touched over her many years of teaching, I thank her for her unwavering commitment to the education of her students. I congratulate Josephine on her retirement and wish her only the best in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO DANIEL SAFSEL

• Mr. KERRY. Madam President, I would like to congratulate and honor Daniel Safsel, a passionate fourth grader who raised the level of environmental awareness at his elementary school. Daniel urged his school newspaper, the Siwanoy Express, to stop printing and distributing copies of its newsletter and to send it via email instead. As a result of his efforts, the newspaper recently launched their first trial run of the "green" express. Daniel should be extremely proud that he was able to make a valuable contribution toward creating a greener future.

Even though we are faced with a worldwide environmental crisis, Daniel's actions show that young Americans can do their part in ensuring that we live in a safer and cleaner environment. Students like Daniel inspire and remind us all of the power of making our voices heard.

I heartily applaud Daniel Safsel for his initiative in seeking to make his community greener. He has demonstrated a level of commitment and accomplishment that is truly extraordinary in today's world, and deserves our sincere admiration and respect.●

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL EDWARD M. FORTUNATO

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, I wish to publicly commend and congratulate LTC Edward M. Fortunato, U.S. Army, upon his retirement after 20 years of military service. I have come to know and respect Lieutenant