

The act has helped to guarantee the public's "right to know" for generations of Americans. Today, thanks to the reforms contained in the OPEN Government Act, which was signed into law on December 31, Americans who seek information under FIOA will experience a process that is much more transparent and less burdened by delays than it has been in the past. This is very good news. But there is still much more to be done to ensure that FOIA remains an effective tool for keeping our democracy open and free.

A key component of the OPEN Government Act is the creation of an Office of Government Information Services, OGIS, within the National Archives and Records Administration. The office would mediate FOIA disputes, review agency compliance with FOIA, and house a newly created FOIA ombudsman. Establishing a fully funded OGIS is essential to reversing the troubling trend of the last 7 years towards lax FOIA compliance and excessive Government secrecy.

I am pleased that the Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies—a panel on which I served—last week rejected the President's budget proposal to move the functions of OGIS to the Department of Justice. I will continue to work very hard to ensure that OGIS is fully funded within the National Archives—as Congress intended—so that this important office has the necessary resources to fully comply with the OPEN Government Act.

There is also more work to be done to further strengthen FOIA. Earlier this year, I was pleased to join with Senator JOHN CORNYN in introducing the OPEN FOIA Act, S. 2746, a bill that requires Congress to clearly and explicitly state its intention to create a statutory exemption to FOIA when it provides for such an exemption in new legislation. While there is a very real need to keep certain Government information secret to ensure the public good and safety, excessive Government secrecy is a constant temptation and the enemy of a vibrant democracy.

The OPEN FOIA Act provides a safeguard against the growing trend towards FOIA exemptions, and would make all FOIA exemptions clear and unambiguous, and vigorously debated, before they are enacted into law. The Senate Judiciary Committee will consider this bill at its business meeting this week, and I urge all members to support this legislation to further restore the public's trust in their Government.

As we reflect upon the celebration of another FOIA anniversary, we in Congress must also reaffirm our commitment to open and transparent government. As I have said many times, open government is not a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. It is an American value and a virtue that all Americans hold dear. It is in this bipartisan spirit that I join Americans from

across the political spectrum in celebrating the 42nd anniversary of the birth of FOIA and all that this law has come to symbolize about our vibrant democracy.

#### HONORING THE RESCUERS OF KEITH KENNEDY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the dedication of all those involved in the safe and miraculous return of Keith Kennedy, an autistic man from Shoreview, MN, who spent this past week alone, without food or shelter, lost in the woods of northwestern Wisconsin.

His safe return has been called a miracle, but this miracle would not have been possible without the commitment of the hundreds of volunteers, law enforcement officers, firefighters and medics who selflessly gave their time and continued to search for Keith, even when all hope seemed lost.

Special recognition must go to Gary Ruiz and Jim Cotroneo, two St. Paul firefighters who found Keith against all odds. Their efforts, and the efforts of their colleagues who joined them in this search, ensured a joyful ending to what could so easily have been another tragedy.

I cannot fail to mention Keith's parents, Bruce and Linda Kennedy, whose spirit of hope was by all accounts an inspiration to those who participated in bringing Keith home safely. Their bravery and the bravery of their son are an inspiration to us all.

I believe this story shows once again the willingness of Minnesotans, and of our friends in Wisconsin, to go beyond what is asked of them to come together as a community and support those in need. My hope is that the actions of all those who gave of themselves so that Keith could return home, will inspire others to do the same.

#### IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, earlier this week, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering over 1,000, are heartbreaking and touching. To respect their efforts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through [energy\\_prices@crapo.senate.gov](mailto: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:

SENATOR CRAPO, Thank you for the opportunity to tell my story. I am nearly 70 years old and for 40 to 50 years have dreamed of a vacation in Jasper National Park in Canada. This year was to be the year to go. I had a new vehicle, a competent driver to share the driving, and I had the money. Well, I had the money until the price of gas began to rise so sharply. I had to cancel this dream trip. I may never get to Jasper.

My sister and I made weekly trips to Boise for religious purposes. Because of the cost of gas, we had to cut that back to twice a month.

I have a little patch of strawberries that produces more than I can use. I have shared with friends, family and neighbors nearby. There are many who I would love to share with (and they would love to have them), but they live too far to make it worth the trip with the high cost of gas.

My sister and I are on a limited budget (Social Security), and the cost of gas has caused the prices of food and other things we have to buy to skyrocket. We live at least 20 miles from town, one way. It costs over three times for gas to go to town than it used to. There are no buses in our area.

My personal opinion is that the environmentalists should either donate their money to pay for foreign fuel or let us produce that which we have in our own country. I think they are being very selfish, and I wish a bunch of those characters had to live on less than \$1,000 per month.

Sincerely,

DELORES, Melba.

With the gas prices the way they are, my family has to stay home instead of camping, fishing and other family activities we have done in the past. The grocery stores have had to raise the prices because of the price of fuel. My wife travels 55 miles a day for work in a car that is on its last leg. I cannot replace it because of the money that we are spending in fuel. I never worried about "filling my tank" before, but now I cannot fill my tank because of the price of fuel. I feel like my government wants the fuel to keep going up and up. Everybody says that the oil companies are making a fortune, but they make 4 cents a gallon and taxes are 50 cents a gallon. So who is making the money, the oil companies or the government? Please help us by lowering the fuel prices even if we have to rely on the oil in the United States and not buy from the Middle East.

JASON, Pocatello.

DEAR SENATOR, I am concerned about your ignorance on why prices not only at the pump but on anything we buy are up. The Federal Reserve is most responsible for this inflation. It is taught in economics 101. The Federal Reserve has inflated our dollar 50 percent in the last 7 years, according to their statistics. That means 7 years ago, if you had \$100,000 in the bank, it would only buy half as much today "say \$50,000". This means if you made \$10.00 an hour seven years ago and your wages stayed the same, you only have the buying power of \$5.00/hour.

The Federal Reserve inflates our money supply. They will not give the M3 numbers out because there's a conscious effort not to let the public know what they are doing. You must kick the can, do your research on how inflation really works before you even talk about making changes. If you are to fix the problem, go to the Congress and ask them to fire the Federal Reserve.

Sure, energy prices are up, and these big companies are making big profits. The big oil companies are only in the right place at the right time. The Federal Reserve was voted in wrongly Dec 24, 1913. This was when no one could vote against the creation of the