Greens and turned into soup. Along with 40,000 pounds of squash and pumpkin, Pete’s bought 2,000 pounds of High Mowing’s cucumbers this year and turned them into pickles.

For the past two years, many of these farmers and businessmen have met informally on the weekends to share experience, for business planning and marketing or pass on information about, say, a graphic designer who did good work on promotional materials or a government who have been particularly helpful. They promote one another’s products at trade fairs and buy equipment at auctions that their colleagues need.

More important, they share capital. They’ve lent each other about $300,000 in short-term loans. When investors visited Mr. Stearns over the summer, he took them on a tour of his neighbors’ farms and businesses.

To expand these enterprises further, the Center for an Agricultural Economy recently bought a 15-acre property to start a center for agricultural education. There will also be a year-round farmers’ market. (from what begins at Warming and ends at Warming and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, with a greenhouse and a community garden, which started with one plot and now has 22, withugree royal heirloom variety. It is a Community Supported Restaurant. Fifty investors who put in $1,000 each will have the money repaid through discounted meals at the restaurant over four years.

“Local ingredients, open to the world,” is the motto on restaurant’s floor-to-ceiling windows. “There’s Charlie who made the bread today,” Kristina Michelsen, one of four partners, said in a running commentary one night, identifying farmers and producers at various tables. “That’s Pete from Pete’s Greens. You’re eating his tomatoes.”

Roxy as it all seems, some worry that as businesses grow larger the owners will be tempted to sell out to companies that would not have Hardwick’s best interests at heart. But the residents have reason to be optimistic: Mr. Stearns said that within one week six businesses wanted to meet with him to talk about moving to the Hardwick area. “Things that were impossible not so long ago are now going to happen,” said Mr. Stearns. “In the next few years a new wave of businesses will come in behind us. So many things are possible with collaboration.”

TRIBUTE TO PETER CHERNIN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I yield to no one in my support of the freedoms set out in the first amendment to the Constitution, and I have devoted considerable time and energy to their protection and preservation. On October 21, 2008, I had the privilege of honoring Peter Chernin, the CEO of Fox News, and a man who shares my belief in the need to vigorously defend the first amendment. That night, I congratulated Peter on receiving the Media Institute’s First Amendment Award and noted that he richly deserved for his stand against rigid and unyielding application of so-called indecency rules at the Federal Communications Commission, I believe that his words in defense of the first amendment should be heard and heeded by all Americans, not just by those who were fortunate enough to attend that event.

I ask unanimous consent that the statement of Peter Chernin from October 21, 2008, be printed in the Record.

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

POLITICS, INDUSTRY, AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Thank you so much for that introduction, Senator Leahy. Your strong and unambiguous support for the First Amendment is legendary on Capitol Hill, and I could not be more pleased to have you, a former recipient of this award, as my presenter tonight. And thank you to the Media Institute for bestowing this honor on me. As the head of a media company, I am at times painfully aware of how important the First Amendment is to our ability to create thought-provoking and controversial content. And as a citizen of this country, I am thankful every day for the miracle that we are blessed with: the freedom to speak freely, the freedom to pursue our religious beliefs without persecution, and the freedom of the press to criticize our government.

We live in a pluralistic society. One where diversity rules, where disagreement is a constant, and where there is more than one right answer for every question. It’s messy. And for creators of content, if we’re doing our jobs right, we sometimes offend people. But it’s our duty to make sure that we wrestle with that fact. We struggle with complex issues every day. Are we guilty of contributing to the vulgarity of our society or similarly, is it our responsibility to be the arbiters of good taste, or is it our duty to push boundaries? Is it even possible to create innovative programming for a mass audience that is diverse on every level—from age, to religious affiliation, to ethnicity?

We don’t take these issues lightly. We are certainly thinking of the important role we play in shaping our culture. Whether we’re creating television shows, making films, or working at a newspaper or publishing house. Certainly, we all have a responsibility to be the arbiters of good taste, or is it our duty to push boundaries? Is it even possible to create innovative programming for a mass audience that is diverse on every level—from age, to religious affiliation, to ethnicity?

We don’t take these issues lightly. We are certainly thinking of the important role we play in shaping our culture. Whether we’re creating television shows, making films, or working at a newspaper or publishing house. Certainly, we all have a responsibility to be the arbiters of good taste, or is it our duty to push boundaries? Is it even possible to create innovative programming for a mass audience that is diverse on every level—from age, to religious affiliation, to ethnicity?
pick our cases. In fact, if anyone had told me that my company would be before the U.S. Supreme Court defending inane comments by Cher and Nicole Ritchie, I would have said you were crazy. I would continue to believe that the nature of this speech, and who said it, makes absolutely no difference. Because at the core of this case is an absolute threat to the First Amendment freedoms that the FCC and the government have no business turning on and off. If we are found in violation, just think about the radical ramifications for live programming—from news, to politics, to sports. In every live broadcast television event, the effect would be appalling.

There is a certainty to the fact that the way this case is filed in this case and the election of the 44th President of the United States are taking place on the same day: The Fox case is an affront to the First Amendment. The election is an affirmation of our democratic process. And the two are inextricably intertwined. The First Amendment is central to our democratic process because it ensures a full and open dialogue about the candidates for office. Without the First Amendment, our democracy could not be functional.

But the truth is, people don’t think about defending broadcasters’ right to utter expletives in the same way they think about defending their right to speak critically of our government. But they should. The First Amendment is at stake in both cases. As a media company, we have not just a right but a responsibility to speak critically of our government. Without the First Amendment, our democracy could not be functional.

I’d admit: some of the content we are defending is not particularly tasteful: the expletives, the brief nudity, the carelessly placed whipped cream and, of course, the pixels. I would not have allowed my own children, when they were younger, to watch some of these shows. But, I vow to fight to the end for our ability to put occasionally controversial, offensive, and even tasteless content on the air.

Why? Because, if the government gets its foot on the accelerator in this unpopular entertainment content, it is the beginning of the slide toward censoring unpopular political content. And we have seen this in this case. In a recent case where the FCC initially found indecent content in a news program. If we allow our government to intrude into the creative process to censor the “bad words” at issue in the Fox case, I am afraid we will soon reach the bottom of the slide—to America’s detriment.

Groups that claim to be interested in “protecting children” are helping the government along in its attempts to censor television. In my view, these groups are just another interest group. I fully support their right to criticize what’s on television. But the job of protecting children is far too important to leave to government bureaucrats or so-called public interest groups. The job of protecting children lies with parents. The job of the government is to resist the views of interest groups with particular agendas and instead to enforce the law in a way that is consistent, fair, and constitutional. So I don’t blame these groups for the degradation of the Fox case. I blame on our government, which has succumbed to the views of a particularly vocal minority.

Look, I am not insensitive to the fact that young viewers need to be protected, and that’s difficult in an era of single parent, or two working parent households. But the protection of children must be considered in a Twenty-First Century light. Nearly every TV set sold today includes a V-Chip, which allows parents to block content they think may be inappropriate for their children. Cable, satellite, and telco video providers have finely-tuned, comprehensive parental controls. And let’s not forget the most powerful, up-to-the-minute on the one-off switch. These tools allow adults to protect their kids while still being able to access shows they love.

We as media companies also have a responsibility: to rate shows accurately and consistently so the V-Chip works as it should. And, as I said earlier, we need to be responsible with what we do on a daily basis through our Standards and Practices departments, not only by exercising editorial judgment but by constantly fine-tuning and improving our internal controls.

Let’s step back for a minute and get some perspective on this issue. The indecency law applies only to broadcast TV: that’s a handful of channels. Over 85 percent of the country receives their broadcast channels through a cable, telco line, or satellite signal. Sitting in front of the broadcast channels on these multichannel systems are hundreds of other channels that are not subject to the indecency law.

And those channels are just a click away on the remote control. Nor does the indecency law apply to video-on-demand, pay per view, DVDs, or the mother of all content providers: the Internet. Does it really make sense to continue government censorship of the occasional bad word, brief nudity, or sexual innuendo on a handful of broadcast channels, when we have an armada of infinitely unregulated choices? In the media-rich world we live in, singling out a few channels for indecency enforcement is not legally sustainable.

Quite simply, it is time for the government to get out of the business of regulating “indecent” speech on broadcast TV. The threat it poses to core First Amendment values cannot be justified in our technologically diverse world. Parents have the tools to decide what is appropriate for their children. Let’s let parents do their job and fire the government from the job of censoring speech. The First Amendment is too important to our democratic society to have these elections to allow any encroachments to threaten our country’s critical freedoms.

Thanks.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded. And it is heartening well over 1,200, are heartbreaking and touching. While energy prices have dropped in recent weeks, the concerns expressed remain very relevant. To respect the efforts of those who took the time to share their thoughts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through an address set up specifically for this purpose 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 that we must hear.

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 this RECORD, as follows:

We are glad to hear that at least one of our politicians is concerned about how the gasoline prices are affecting the middle class. But we do feel that the politicians are extremely out of touch with the majority of the country.

We are retired on a fixed income and we watch every dollar we spend. We get a motor home for vacations, but unfortunately we now cannot use it because of the price of gasoline and it just sits there. We try to go out shopping for groceries and any other necessities just once a week, making a list of items and stores, color coding so we do not forget anything. The cost of energy also has increased the price of groceries tremendously, so basic foods and produce are the norm—doing away with any treats. We have never seen the price of gasoline increase day by day so fast. It is a nice feeling when gas prices are down.

We desperately need to have alternate sources of energy, such as coal, windmills, solar and nuclear. We have been building new refineries and recovering oil off all our coasts since the 1970s when this same problem came up at that time, but, to our dismay, we did not.

Automobiles should get a lot more than the 35 mpg that we have heard mentioned for future vehicles. It should be at the very least 50 mpg, and there is no reason in this world with our technology that this could not be a reality. Something should be done to increase the mileage on all of the vehicles that are on the road in the USA and its citizens but the USA itself. We cannot just go out and buy a hybrid or other fuel efficient vehicle at the drop of a hat to help the situation. We drive our 2002 Honda 4 cylinder between 50 and 60 mph on the highway to increase our fuel efficiency and you should see the bad looks we get. Highway mileage should be lowered to 55 mph like in the 70s to help conserve.

We do hope that our government does something quickly to improve this situation now. It is not just fuel in the USA and its citizens but the USA itself. We need some action now—Please.

ROBERT AND ROBERTA, Idaho Falls.