

I have come to rely on her knowledge and expertise in the areas of small business lending, banking, and women's business issues. She is a thoughtful member of the Committee's staff who could be relied upon for her ideas on how to strengthen legislation to benefit our Nation's small business owners. Just this year, Linda played a pivotal role in helping me develop legislation to alleviate the small business credit crunch and provide oversight over small business lenders. When Congress reconvenes next year, I will push to see that the Small Business Lending Oversight and Program Performance Improvement Act and the 10 Steps for a Main Street Economic Recovery Act are enacted into law.

The consummate professional, Linda was always well prepared for committee hearings, markups and roundtables. She consistently provided me with detailed materials that clearly explained complex situations and offered proactive and comprehensive solutions to problems regarding small business lending, access to credit, and women's business concerns. Linda's ability to build and maintain relationships with constituents, issue experts, and staff from other Members' offices has served me and the committee well. In all her years on the Small Business Committee, Linda has been a passionate advocate for small businesses and their owners. Her eagerness to make a difference in people's lives is nothing short of commendable.

After her tenure here in Washington, Linda is leaving the Senate to pursue a cause dear to her heart. Soon, she will be heading to Iraq to work as a business development specialist with one of the State Department's provincial reconstruction teams, or PRTs. PRTs are vital to our mission in Iraq, as they are made up of experts who advise the U.S. military and local Iraqi government on a wide array of issues, including economic and business development. Linda's work with the PRT will continue her pursuit of serving others, and will help win the hearts and minds of Iraqis in need of this vital aid.

Linda Le is a person of remarkable strength and selflessness. And to make her story all the more compelling, her husband Hung, a communications officer in the U.S. Army National Guard, recently deployed to Afghanistan to serve our country in the war on terror. Clearly, the word "service" has a profound meaning in Linda's household. I speak for my entire staff when I say we will keep Linda and her husband in our thoughts and prayers during their time overseas, and we wish Linda safe travels and much success in her new and incredible endeavor.

While I am sad to see Linda leave, I am excited for her bright future. She has used her talents to the fullest extent here in the Senate, and I am confident that she will continue to excel in everything she does. Thank you, Linda, for your dedicated service to your country, and best wishes as you begin

an extraordinary new chapter in your life.

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 by the hundreds. The stories, numbering 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 opportunity 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 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:

Thank you for listening to us. Please increase domestic oil production now. If it takes 10 years before we see the oil, then do it for the children. Also, please expand nuclear energy research and production.

VIRGINIA, *Rexburg.*

The price of gasoline has impacted our family budget. How much? I do not know, the price of gasoline continues to rise so quickly it is hard to see the whole impact. A few of the things we need to do are the following: More R&D dollars spent by the government for alternate energy sources; More nuclear plants are need across the nation; More plants to process the oil into gasoline are needed; More taxes on the oil companies, too.

KEVIN, *Rupert.*

Yes, we would like to see us drilling for fuel in our own country, exploring all options of new sources and conservation. It is hypocritical to not drill for our own fuel because of the environment and then buy from other (not so friendly!!) countries. We are a small business. We are working on a lower profit margin due to the high prices. We are trying to keep from raising our prices for as long as we can. We are taking steps to minimize our driving. That only goes so far. We support your idea Senator Crapo. Thank you for not signing on to that energy/environment bill.

SANDRA.

What a bunch of nonsense this is when America supports the Middle East so they can build indoor ski areas, palm tree islands out of sand for the mega-wealthy in the ocean and cut off the heads of Christians and Americans on television while we have enough gas and oil for all of America and more right under our noses.

What are you, our representatives, thinking? You are all out of control—you speak but you do not act, you type great things, ask for money to support your habit of power

seeking at the top, being in the limelight, etc. and you continue to let American go further down in the eyes of the world—not to mention being abhorred by American citizens.

There is no respect for the office of the President, whom the press refer to as "Mr. Bush or just Bush" not President Bush.

You want our story—we are older American citizens, 63 and 65 years of age. We were born in World War II. We lived through Korea. We hid under our desks and against walls in elementary school in fear of the bomb which now our grandchildren have to fear. We lost our husbands, brothers and friends for nothing in Vietnam for a corrupt President's wife to continue to have her trucking companies pay huge dividends into their Texas ranch and still cannot say for sure just who killed President Kennedy. Desert Storm was a joke—what did we accomplish there—in and out and did not finish the job. 911 wasn't funny but we still cannot decide how to handle the "bad boys" that blew up our world that horrible day. We are being told that it is just another day in the life of people elsewhere—are we supposed to accept that and just move on?

And now "The Changeling" wants to disarm Americans and create a global government—look out for your job—it may be gone sooner than you think. The Program People are winning. We are now disrespected around the world.

Now we refuse to win in America for real tax-paying Americans, with citizenship, that have earned the American dream and are courting the illegal people in the country while spitting in my face. My husband just turned 66 and 10 months. Whoopee! He may now have a "reduced" amount of Social Security because he needs it now—not 6 years from now when it may not even be available. Here's the breakdown:

The Social Security he paid into for 48 years will give him approximately \$1650 dollars a month (Rent/Utilities/Insurance/Gas/Food/Medical—probably not enough);

The Medicare system which he also paid into for years charges him \$93.10 a month to continue to be a part of that system he should have earned by now and is broken at best;

A Medicare Supplement, which you have to have to get decent medical care, costs \$125+ a month added to the \$93.10.

A Prescription Supplement runs another \$25+ dollars added to the \$93.10 and the \$125 and we still use \$4.00 WalMart for generics when possible;

And, we still have no dental, no vision, no disability, no long term care and no respect as doctors continue to refuse new patients on Medicare only.

And don't tell us that Socialized Medicine is any better—have a brain tumor in Canada or France or Denmark and wait 6-9 months for the MRI that has to be done in the coffin because you, my friend, died of brain cancer that was operable 6-9 months ago.

We have no debt other than our house and one small car payment. We now have to plan one day a week for errands. We calculate the difference between buying groceries at the closer grocery store with the cost of gas versus the savings we might get at the super WalMart. We chose a new doctor closer to the house. We do not go to the dentist twice a year for cleaning and preventative any more. We have not seen the eye doctor in over a year and a half—the old glasses will have to do for a while more.

And we still have a business in home and work 40+ hours a week so the government can take back some of the Medicare money they spent on doctor visits and tax 85 percent of the Social Security we earned.

What a bunch of nonsense, Mr. Crapo! You people need to get a grip and start acting

like you care as much about Americans as you do a bunch of thieving, illegal criminals that are robbing us blind and bringing down America. Go get our gas, throw out the illegals, bring down our taxes, put the prisoners that deserve it to work and use the death penalty for the rest of them that cost this country billions of dollar feeding, clothing, housing, educating and medicating when you let small children go without all of the above and live on the streets.

You, our government are killing our country—America is coming to an end as we know it—will it be a better place with the “changlings” taking over—I seriously doubt it—I even seriously doubt that you will read this far because the truth of the situation in America is something our government, elected representatives of the people—do not want to hear.

Want to talk—I'm all for it.

MARLEE.

This note is to urge you to vote to resolve the issue of high fuel costs and the impact it is having on the economy. Please consider off shore drilling, increasing the fuel refining capacities as well as research on viable energy resources. Perhaps legislators should study the impact of legislation before implementation, such as the effects on the economy regarding use of corn for alternative energy. Corn is used in almost all food items as well as in animal feed . . . There goes food costs through the trickle-down theory. Question: do legislators have “think tanks” they can use before passing legislation that effects us all in such a massive way? And, why are we not using them?

We are semi-retired and live about twenty miles from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Being on a mostly fixed income, high energy costs have certainly caused us to decrease our shopping trips, and to buy only those necessities. Monies we have saved for retirement, we now have to spend.

Why is it that 14 percent of the population can prevent off shore drilling? It appears that if the U.S. is not going to use this energy, other countries will. I guess it is a case of “the squeaky wheel gets the grease;” the rest of us are too busy trying to make a living to lobby.

I understand that there has been an auto carburetor available for years that would increase mileage tremendously. What has happened to this?

Incentives for conservation are great . . . And effective as it has a favorable consequence for the pocketbook.

We are all for expanding nuclear energy . . . But only if there is a way to rid the world of its byproduct.

Regards,

DOUG and STEVANNA, *Athol*.

I appreciate the fact that you are asking for personal stories which helps connect voters to legislation that affects them.

My husband and I are your typical American family. We are both young, happy, own our home, have two dogs and two cats. We are blessed to have this life. We live in Boise, Idaho, where I work and my husband commutes to Mountain Home Air Force Base every day. He spends two hours a day commuting, 40 hours a month driving back and forth between Boise and Mountain Home. This, combined with an 8-12 hour workday, means he is home very little.

We have been together for three years and every year he has deployed to Iraq. We have not complained about his frequent visits or the minimal compensation that we receive for his leave, because we both understand that it is necessary and important for him to go. But what hurts our family the most is that we are having difficulty affording the

gasoline for him to go to work when he's home. We have a fuel efficient vehicle that we are paying the loan on monthly and the gas for commuting is the equivalent of a second car payment a month.

I am ashamed that our country is so reactive, that we were not prepared to accommodate new forms of energy that could have spared families and businesses from straining their financial means because of gasoline. I am requesting as a citizen, faithful voter and consumer that Congress take the steps necessary to implement a cleaner, more efficient and renewable form of energy to sustain our economy.

KRISTIN.

I was very excited to receive your email and learn of the chance to tell our story of struggle with the outrageous gasoline prices. My husband and I live near the Hunt Relocation Monument in Jerome County. I know you have visited that site, so you are aware how far we are from the nearest towns (about 20 miles).

My husband is a school teacher. We have five children at home. I have gone back to school to get my teaching certificate so I can contribute to our income, because we cannot make ends meet on a school teacher's salary. With the rising costs of gasoline, we are spending \$700 to \$800 a month just on gasoline, which is a quarter of our take home income every month! We still have a house payment, bills and the rising cost of groceries to deal with on top of that. If things keep going like this, we will lose our home. We are rapidly going through our savings just to have the bare necessities.

I urge and implore you and our government leaders to please explore the option of opening up our own oil fields, building refineries, whatever it takes to end our dependence on foreign oil.

JIM and JANEIL, *Jerome*.

We are surviving just fine and will continue to do so. We have cut back on driving to places we would go this time of year and do think about short trips. Is this trip necessary?

I am upset with Congress and their lack of foresight in producing energy in this country. You have made it impossible for oil companies to drill in areas that could produce energy now and in the future. And you continually want to blame “big oil” for high prices. I do not. And you spend money that we do not have. How did you vote on the recent farm bill?

Abolish the code and go to a flat tax, ten percent, with no deductions of any sort. And quit spending!

NEIL.

Thank you for fighting for us, we are getting pinched hard with the increased price for gas.

Our family story is not as dramatic as some I am sure you will receive, but it is a picture of Middle America. I work for the Federal Government and have an excellent job for the Orofino area. My wife sells real estate. (need I say more about her recent lack of income). We have two daughters both in high school looking toward possible medical careers. We have been saving for their college education, but with this recent double whammy of housing market crash and high gas prices it looks like we might have to discontinue our savings plan contributions to buy gas to get to work.

(I feel like a whiner when compared to the financial crisis some “on the edge” families must be facing).

A web site <http://www.american.solutions.com/> has a petition going around to drill here in the U.S. I have read a lot of the

site and signed the petition as have many others I know. I read some of the recommended solutions and debunked myths in the solutions forum; I suggest you or staff have a look for some possible answers.

Thank you again.

PAUL and KATHY, *Orofino*.

My family and I live in S.E. Idaho. We have been extremely affected by the high gas prices that have occurred. I will not let my wife drive anywhere unless it is absolutely necessary. She does the grocery shopping and I have got her to only go once every 1 or 2 weeks. The problem with that is that she needs to get out for a “break”, and I won't even let her do that.

I feel we in the USA should do everything we can to increase domestic oil production, expand nuclear energy research, find other, cheaper fuels, and conserve as much as possible.

BOB.

Our family has made efficiency a priority on our automobile travel. There are rarely “one-stop” trips being made. Our daughter's, age 12 and 9, are stuck making less plans that require a car trip and when we arrange play dates or outings we try to coordinate carpooling with other parents, to share the load. We have decided to keep our vacation local and will camp in McCall this summer, instead of the previously plan RV trip to the East Coast. I have been a full-time housewife for 9 years. Recently, my husband and I have discussed me going back to work to help supplement the cost of food, goods and fuel. When and if I do consider re-entering the work force, I will look for work close to home. We are also considering the purchase of a more fuel efficient vehicle.

All of the little things add up and where expenses are concerned I am sure we are like most families who are doing their best to economize while the cost of goods and fuel are rising.

Please do to whatever you can to aide in the softening of this economic down turn that we are feeling in Southwestern Idaho. Please help to educate the general public on the issues surrounding fuel use and alternatives. Perhaps, by informing and educating the citizens, we will be able to make better choices on the vehicles we purchase. I think the public deserves honest explanations for what the root cause is on the increase of the cost of fuel. Is it the war in Iraq? Is it our relations with the Middle East? Does the housing down-turn have an effect on the dollar value, which in turn changes the “value” of oil? I would love to have the knowledge to explain this to my children, however, the media doesn't inform us with facts . . . and I think that is what we need.

Good luck with your endeavor. Thank you for inviting the Idaho citizens to be included in your collective effort to change and improve our fuel crisis.

LISA, *Eagle*.

I will write about the impacts being felt by my wife and I and send it to you later. For now, I am forwarding this “Joe American” site I hope you and your staff will take time to watch. This man is making more sense than anyone I have heard from Federal, State, or local leadership. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPch2k63u4>.

Thank you for the work you are doing. I do hope you will find some ideas in the above listed site that will help you to work more effectively.

Sincerely,

ORVILLE, *Idaho Falls*.

Start drilling in our own country, especially Alaska. Forget about the polar bears—

relief has got to come the consumers way. This is all political and the oil companies are gouging this country—make them accountable and they should be fined and monies returned to the citizens of this country.

LINDA.

I travel about 140 miles two to three times a week and need to fill up on the third trip each time. Each fill up costs close to \$40.00. I think the U.S. should spend more on nuclear power as well as wind and solar power. We should also start looking for oil on our own soil including all of Alaska and off shore. Thank you Senator Crapo for all you are doing for us here in Idaho.

DOYLE, *Arco*.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO LAVENIA MCCOY

• Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, when Lavenia McCoy arrived in Bayfield in 1939 as new teacher, she also went to the library to volunteer. She has served that library continuously: from the small space behind the post office, to the town hall on the east side of the post office, to the entire 1100-square-foot building at the corner of Mill and Pearl Streets, to the new 8200-square-foot library on the north side of town.

Lavenia McCoy was the first person in Bayfield to catalog books by the Dewey Decimal System, a change for the alphabetical order by author's last name of the 500 or so books. She began serving on the Library Board in 1948, at the behest of Betty Stock, as secretary. About 35 years later, Lavenia McCoy became treasurer, including keeping the library's financial records; she did that until 2006. By then the budget had increased from pennies for overdue fees to several million dollars, the staff from all volunteer to six paid librarians, the circulation from a few shelves of books to 20,000 volumes, and the financial records from ledger to computer. Always she encouraged folks to use their library.

Lavenia McCoy is a lifelong library user, and she is one who is willing to do the work in order to enjoy the privilege. In 2005, the Library Board named its new library "Lavenia McCoy Public Library" in recognition of her contribution. I wanted to take a moment to congratulate her and her service.●

TRIBUTE TO BRAD SCOTT

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today I recognize and pay tribute to a good friend and longtime colleague in public service: Brad Scott.

I have known Brad for more than 20 years, first as a dedicated and effective employee, and later as a visionary Government administrator.

On January 9, 2009, he will step down from his post as a regional administrator of the General Service Administration after 8 years of innovative and dedicated service.

We sometimes joke that the term "Government efficiency" is an oxymoron, but not when Brad is in

charge. He can make things happen. At a time when political concerns seem to dominate much of the landscape, Brad has worked across the aisle to get things done by focusing on the common good and doing what is best for Missouri and the Heartland Region.

We all know that in the Federal bureaucracy, it is much harder to complete a project than to derail it or to do nothing at all. Red tape is an all-too-real phenomenon. But since Brad came to the GSA in 2001, he has not stopped building.

In 2001, he brought a set of successful business policies to a GSA region that was suffering from underutilized space and low return on investment. He also worked hard to build consensus between local communities, the private sector and Government on large-scale projects. He was able to revitalize blighted areas in many of our largest cities by constructing or renovating iconic buildings that now enhance local economic development. He also permanently strengthened these local communities by creating and maintaining jobs.

Brad's accomplishments are too numerous to name. Several of his major contributions include: the construction of First IRS Center in Kansas City, new Federal courthouses in Cape Girardeau and Jefferson City, and the conversion of the Old St. Louis Post Office into a heavily utilized State building.

Brad's long list of accomplishments speaks to his vision, dedication, and uncanny ability to guide key development projects through the bureaucratic maze.

Losing Brad Scott as Regional GSA Administrator will be a real blow to Missouri but the State has been fortunate to have him in that role for so many years. I know that he will continue to be an active participant in issues facing Missouri and the region just as he has always been.

Brad, thank you for your service and I look forward to many more good things to come.●

IDAHO BARLEY COMMISSION 20TH ANNIVERSARY

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, it is an honor for me to recognize the 20th anniversary of the Idaho Barley Commission, IBC, this year. Barley is grown in almost every county in Idaho, and Idaho ranks second in the Nation in barley production. The IBC has been working for growers for two decades, providing current trends, information and educational opportunities to those in the barley industry and representing the concerns and needs of barley growers to policymakers in Idaho and here in Washington.

The IBC plays an integral role in fostering markets at home and abroad in Taiwan and Japan and is currently developing malting barley markets in Mexico, Peru, and Colombia and through the U.S. Grain Council. It

helps ensure that growers' voices are heard in issues like Federal farm policy, Federal malt barley crop insurance, pesticide regulations and irrigation. The IBC is working with the University of Idaho to establish farm business management schools and provides services to growers that include helping farmers optimize herbicide usage, boost yields, and cut irrigation costs. The IBC supports research on barley breeding, pest management, and extension nurseries.

The IBC has a successful history of working in conjunction with the National Barley Growers Association, the National Barley Foods Council, the U.S. Grains Council, and the Idaho Grain Growers Association. This important collaboration helps keep elected officials informed about their members' needs, policies that work, and those in need of improvement. This partnership has been invaluable to me as I continue to work with IBC to address the needs of an important part of Idaho's agriculture economy.

Congratulations to the IBC on 20 years of support for one of Idaho's most widespread commodities. A healthy barley industry keeps Idaho thriving and contributes to our Nation's economy and food security.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING RECESS

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 4, 2008, the Secretary of the Senate, on November 21, 2008, during the recess of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2040. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the semicentennial of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 4, 2008, the enrolled bill was signed on November 24, 2008, by the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).