

the land and on the shelf does not speak well for our collective intelligence.

Unless the sleeping tiger of free-enterprise.

RON.

Drilling for oil now is our only hope. It is out there; it is what we need; go get it! I am encouraged this morning that John McCain wants to drill off shore again. All of the conserving, all of the money being invested in testing new technologies is not going to cut it and it is no substitution for what we really need: OIL! Wind and electricity are not going to power my car or the many other things that need it. Depending on oil from the Middle East is shameful. Please tell Congress to allow production in full force offshore California and in the Gulf, Alaska and in the mid-west now and start repairing the old refineries and building new ones. It needs to be on the fast track; in other words do not take years writing an environmental impact statement. It can be done safely and with minimum impact to the environment.

It is very sad that I am no longer able to travel to visit my 78-year-old Mom in northern Arizona, a trip I/we used to make twice a year. This is distancing families more than ever. I may never see my other family members in California or Minnesota again unless gas prices drop. I am a 56-year-old widow struggling to make ends meet. I have had to give up driving any long distances. I only drive for local errands. It is a struggle now to pay heat, electric and food bills and it will only get worse. But heck, my family and friends are in the same boat; they cannot afford to visit me either.

I am sadly watching the elderly and disabled attempting to walk or ride bicycles to the grocery store that should not. I am seeing empty shelves at the grocery stores and other merchants because the trucks have not come in or are not coming as often. This is nuts.

My husband admired you; if he were here now, he would be the one who had a lot to say about the current situation America is in. You met him on a boat in Lake Coeur d'Alene quite awhile ago. He had much knowledge of our current situation as far back as the 1970s and predicted as did many others our current situation. He died of a brain tumor in 1999. His resume included work in Libya, Alaska, the Gulf, offshore Santa Barbara working for Baroid, and over 30 years of government service with the U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Land Management.

CAROL, *Moscow.*

In response to your energy prices email—the increase for gasoline has been tremendous for my husband and me. We both are senior citizens, but still have jobs and go to work every day. Bob is a realtor and spends \$100 minimum per week. My cost is \$50 plus, even though I do not use my vehicle for work. We live about 14 miles from our offices, and we do not have economy vehicles. We probably could not even sell our cars right now. I work on commission and my paycheck for last month was \$256; that barely covers the \$200 plus for gasoline. Both of these businesses are down right now.

We totally agree with your thinking on this—keep up the good work. Why cannot others get it??

CHERYL, *Coeur d'Alene.*

Feeling the pinch is an understatement. I am very eco-friendly as much that can be afforded; however, when you weigh in the costs for the current prices, it makes it close to impossible to save to afford to be more eco-friendly. Thus creating a further pinch on my way of life. We are setting back those in

our economy and simply making it more difficult to do business. From my aspect, I oversee four hotels in the area and not only is airline travel being down causing an issue to our hotels but the overall cost of operations has risen. These operational costs have been from the increase in food cost many sur-charge related to fuel, to a higher rate of pay to incentive employees to drive that car to work every day, the list can go on.

Personally, I am a single mother and all the costs of my child are that for me to provide. The smallest incremental raise in cost creates stress in our way of life. We have to wage out some other wise "affordable" fun things to do if driving is (and as I love to see Idaho) involved. My gas costs have nearly doubled, food is costing more, and there are limited options other than facing these and dealing with them at face value. I would love to see there be more alternate fuel options so that we are using only what is necessary when it comes to oil.

I support anything you are doing that will make the world a more friendly environment and reusable environment; my greatest hope would be for this evolution to also allow more of my money to stay in my home.

*Shawna.*

Thank you for the opp. Our small business is fairly new, started in 2005, when we changed venue from a motel. It has never been a million dollar enterprise, but we did not expect that and did not need that; just hoped it was something we could hand to our kids when we retire. Every time the gas prices went up, business went down. Then the foreclosures started. Now many of our customers are gone. Some are even going back to California! We are now contemplating bankruptcy. The energy costs are a large part of the reason why. We have a small second hand store where we also sell hand crafted furniture and our pottery. When someone comes into our store with a LIST! we know things are going down the tube. This is the kind of store people normally spend time browsing in. Very few customers can afford to just shop anymore. They are struggling to buy gas to even go to town, and to buy groceries. I suggest an investigation into hydrogen power. It was going well in 1978, then no more was heard about it. We are promoting it to anyone who will listen, and I am going to spend time investigating; not just the feasibility of it, but the how. It is now a definite option.

Thank you for listening,

NANCY, *Priest River.*

I just want to say that as a Disabled American, I feel the pain!! My wife of many years works for the City of Boise while I am disabled and we are no longer moving forward. She works hard at the Water Treatment plant everyday and I battle my conditions equally hard and yet as I fight, the more it costs, electricity for my oxygen machine, copayments to doctors offices, procedures, medications . . . etc. Now with this INFLATION hitting, we are feeling the effects of \$4.00 gas, higher utilities cost across the board, food prices and on and on.

See the thing is, we have been preparing for this for awhile now. Back in 2004 we traded in our 1994 Ford Taurus SHO @ 16 MPG Premium Fuel for a 2004 Honda Civic Hybrid that has gotten us to a real 40 MPG regular fuel. About the same time we moved closer to Sandra's work to save on daily driving. We even went to riding trikes to the Pharmacy and the grocery store, and my wife additionally rides hers to work now a couple of times a week or so . . . and yet we are using savings and have even cut back on putting funds that is matched by the City of Boise. We will be in trouble in a few years unless

something changes. I do not know what our government is going to do, but I believe that if they gave some sort of incentive to buyers to get into hybrids as well as the new clean burning diesel ala Europe. We could improve the oil situation, we have cut our usage by more than you would believe. Drilling up north is happening next door in Canada, what is up with us? We need to be making changes that the rest of the plant sees. We could help the USD to bounce back some and that would help reduce the cost of gas.

PETE.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FREDERICK NEWS-POST

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I wish to honor and congratulate the Frederick News-Post on its 125th anniversary. On October 15, 1883, a printing company in Frederick, MD, published the first edition of *The News*, an evening newspaper that reported about local happenings. In 1916, this printing company purchased another local paper, the *Frederick Post*, which it continued to offer in the mornings. After almost a century of circulating these two editions, the company chose to merge the two papers in 2002 and offer just a morning paper that included not only great local news stories but also important national coverage.

The *Frederick News-Post* circulates over 11 million papers a year and employs over 200 people. The company also includes FNP Printing & Publishing, a commercial printing venture as well as an Internet division called FNP Interactive. The *Frederick News-Post* is a vital part of the Frederick community, and I am so proud that this Maryland newspaper has been successful for the past 125 years. I hope that it continues to bring the news to families around the State for 125 more. ●

## MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, 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

### ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 11:14 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by