

my budget to do something that I love to do—volunteer. I have volunteered with Family Services Alliance of Southeast Idaho for a year, but as the price of gas got over 3\$ a gallon, I had to stop. One part of the job is to be able to drive to homes of victims of domestic violence when the police ask for an advocate. The best way to help a victim of sexual assault or domestic violence is to empower them by showing them that they are not just victims, they are survivors. But to do this, you need to go where they are and intervene immediately. It requires taking a car. While it pains me to have to cut this out of my activities, I have already cut back in other ways and it was a hard decision to make.

DIANA, Pocatello.

I have been a small business owner, (one that pays taxes and one of the thousands of small businesses that support this country) for over thirty-five years. I am amazed and deeply troubled by the political chaos in our country and the energy crisis that is bankrupting this country. Our raw materials have raised three or four fold over the last few years and the energy situation is driving many small businesses out of business. I see the effects trickling down to food and other essentials. Many families are in deep trouble and I see it becoming drastic if something is not done in a short period of time. I do not mean in a few years. If Congress does not take steps immediately to put a stop to this runaway disaster, America will never recover and we will never have a quality of life again in America.

I hate to seem gloomy but I see business and families everyday that are panicked. When we let OPEC and other foreign governments support the so-called "Greenies" and other environmental groups in America to the extent that we cannot take care of our own needs here at home, then we of all people are to be pitied. America is rich with raw materials and coal and oil. It is completely insane to let governments that hate us hold us hostage. My fourteen-year-old grandson has more sense than that. Oil companies are getting filthy rich while the American People are suffering. If there is going to be anything left for our children and grandchildren, then we better quit worrying about the owl or the snail and start worrying about our children and grandchildren. I do not know one American that I associate with that does not care about the environment and wildlife etc. But it is ridiculous for us to govern ourselves into non-existence.

I urge you to take a stand against this corruption and turn us back to common sense. I am very concerned and I vote.

DANNY.

I am a 63-year-old woman who is disabled. I am on SSI when I get a cost of living raise, my rent goes up and eats it up. So for me this is really rough; I run out of money before the month is out. The cost of food has doubled mostly and it goes on and on. thank you.

JUDITH.

High gasoline prices are really putting a damper on our monthly budget. My wife and I are in our 50's and we do not have a high income. I am partially disabled and working for low wages. We do not feel that we are going to be able to drive much longer. We have parked one of our cars. In my driving of over 30 years, we have seen the 1973 oil embargo and so called shortage and many other price hikes. But this is beyond comprehension. I am not one for government control but in this case I feel that the government must take over the oil. Otherwise it is going to put a huge damper on the economy. We

have only seen the beginning. OPEC has held America hostage with these prices.

LARRY.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DEBRA BROWN STEINBERG

• Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I commend Debra Brown Steinberg, an extraordinary woman who I have had the honor of working with for the last few years.

Debra has been a tireless fighter for the families of 9/11 victims. While continuing to work fulltime as a partner at the law firm of Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP, Debra spearheaded her firm's pro bono efforts to assist the families left behind.

The cases she handled were complicated, involving myriad issues. Many families faced social service, financial and immigration complications. Rather than addressing simply the legal aspects of each case, Debra worked to connect organizations, agencies, and policies to tackle cases in their entirety.

In May of 2002, New York State passed the September 11 Victims and Families Relief Act, large portions of which Debra helped draft. She also contributed to the Federal September 11th Family Humanitarian Relief and Patriotism Act, which was introduced by Senator LAUTENBERG in the 110th Congress.

Debra's outstanding work has already been recognized by numerous current and former Members of Congress, Presidential candidates, authors, activists, religious leaders, the New York State Bar Association, and many distinguished publications. She has received the Ellis Island Medal of Freedom and commendations from the New York City Fire Department and Chief of Police. No one, however, can better speak to Debra's service than the families themselves. In a thank-you note, a sister of one of the victims wrote:

[Debra] held us, offered her shoulder, and made us feel that it is still worthwhile to continue this passage. Thank God for this Angel.

For the last 7 years, Debra Steinberg has fought for justice for a group of people forgotten in the shadows of this terrible tragedy. She has given selflessly of her time and expertise to help those in need and is an example to others and a credit to our country. I am proud to call her my friend.●

TRIBUTE TO STELLA MAY BROWN WEACO

• Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, all of us in Massachusetts who knew her or knew of her were saddened to learn of the death of Stella May Brown Weaco at Massachusetts General Hospital on New Year's Eve.

Stella was born in Mississippi, but she called Boston her home for the last

26 years of her life and she became a legend in our city. She lived on the streets, but her plight never deterred her gentle spirit. She found a home and a family in the volunteers and the fellow guests at the Women's Lunch Place, the famed daytime shelter in the city for poor and homeless women. She went there every day after the shelter opened in 1982, and she became a familiar face and beloved friend to many other members of the community.

Stella had an amazingly positive impact on every person she met. She is very fondly remembered as very grateful, very amicable, and very kind. Year after year, the Women's Lunch Place tried to persuade her to accept housing, but her indomitable spirit led her to decline such assistance. Finally, when the pressures of daily living on the streets became unbearable even for Stella, she graciously accepted the help of those around her and spent the last 2 years on her life in the Pine Street Inn.

Even then, Stella unfailingly came back to the Women's Lunch Place as often as she could, to seek out the familiar faces and friendships she cherished so much there. Sadly, Stella passed away on New Year's Eve, in the company of those who loved her for the joy she had given to their lives. In many ways, Stella exemplified the power and the spirit of giving and the extraordinary importance of human kindness. She'll be deeply missed, but the impact she had on all who knew her is immeasurable, and the lessons she taught will never be forgotten.

Mr. President, I ask that the obituary of Stella written by Women's Lunch Place Executive Director Sharon Reilly and an eloquent column about Stella by Rachele Cohen in the Boston Herald may be printed in the RECORD.

The information follows:

STELLA TAUGHT US ALL ABOUT GRACE,
DIGNITY

(By Rachele Cohen, Jan. 5, 2009)

We lost Stella on New Year's Eve.

Even as the city prepared to usher out this year that nearly everyone agrees they couldn't wait to see end, this woman who had little and complained little died in the company of those who cared about her and for her.

For at least a quarter of a century Stella lived on the streets. And we only know that much because she was there when the Women's Lunch Place, a daytime shelter for poor and homeless women, first opened its doors 26 years ago.

For all those years she'd come for breakfast, a shower, to do her laundry, maybe take a nap and stay through lunch. For all those Thanksgivings and Christmases she had found a warm, accepting place.

She was there when I reported for my first stint as a volunteer, by then Stella was an undemanding kind of queen bee—occupying her favorite spot against the wall in the dining room. She was engaging and gracious, accepting a pancake with butter and syrup as if it were a special gift.

Stella became the ultimate challenge for Lunch Place staff over the years. The confusion that reigned in her head—which often