

Instead, his death leaves a father and mother to bury their son; a fatherless daughter, Iyanna; and a widowed and pregnant wife, Katana. Their memories of Stephen are bright and indelible: Stephen planting tomatoes, spinach, and string beans in the backyard garden with his grandmother; Stephen giving a pony ride to his 7-year-old cousin; Stephen watching "Bugs Bunny" with infant Iyanna. Today, I imagine that each of those memories comes back with a stab of grief to those who loved Stephen; but I pray that time will turn them into a wellspring of comfort.

This war leaves behind more anguish than we can easily bear. At 4 a.m. on Tuesday morning, Stephen's mother, Jacqueline Hamilton-Carby, started out of bed in Jamaica and sat down to write him a letter: "It has been 43 days, that is 1,032 hours or 61,920 minutes, better yet 3,715,200 seconds, since I heard your voice. That is a long, 1-on-n-g time but whereas I was worried before, I have placed you in the hand of God." On the same day, her son was killed.

But she has no doubt that he is in that hand still. "I'm not angry with anyone," said Ms. Hamilton-Carby. "I just view it as the work of God."

May she find comfort, and all who loved Stephen, and all who are bereaved. I add my voice to their prayers, and I pledge my highest respect to an American soldier who died in our service, Private First Class Stephen K. Richardson.

STRATEGIC REFINERY RESERVE ACT

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on a bill I introduced, the Strategic Refinery Reserve Act of 2007. This bill would authorize the Department of Energy to build enough refining capacity to meet the energy needs of the Federal Government—primarily the Department of Defense—and to supply the private market in times of shortages and price spikes.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which severely damaged oil refineries in the Gulf Coast, illustrated the Nation's vulnerability to a disruption in supply of refined petroleum and exposed shortcomings in our current Strategic Petroleum Reserve system. The Strategic Refinery Reserve Act would address these issues by having a refining capacity of 5 percent of total U.S. consumption of gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel. Three percent of capacity would be held in reserve, ready to increase supply in the private market in times of energy emergencies. The remaining 2 percent of that would go to the Federal Government to support the day-to-day needs of the military, saving taxpayers from paying the oil industry's inflated prices.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration reported Monday that drivers paid an average of \$2.80 a gallon for regular gasoline last week, up from \$2.70 the week prior. According to the

report, prices are now 11.7 cents per gallon higher than April of 2006. The price per barrel of oil, set by the Middle East cartel Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC, is only one factor that pushes up the price of gas and oil in our country. Refining capacity, the infrastructure that takes crude oil and turns it into gas, is down dramatically, which pushes the price of gas up for everyone.

U.S. refineries today are running at full, or near full, capacity. In 1981, there were 324 refineries in the United States; today there are 149. Big Oil has made it clear that they are unwilling to reinvest their record profits in new refineries because the less they sell, the more they make per gallon. That may be good for oil company shareholders, but it is bad for consumers. The Strategic Refinery Reserve Act will ensure the availability of emergency refinery capacity and protect consumers from sharp increases in the price of petroleum products. Our economy, our military, our communities and our families are struggling under the burden of high energy prices. They expect us to work to bring energy prices down. This bill would do that.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN HONOR OF JOSEPH W. COTCHETT

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I recognize Joseph W. Cotchett of Burlingame, CA, on the occasion of his being honored by Santa Clara University School of Law as their 2007 Distinguished Advocate. Joe is a partner in the law firm of Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy and is widely considered to be one of the leading trial lawyers in the United States by plaintiffs and defense attorneys.

The renowned Santa Clara University, SCU, School of Law is honoring Joe for his exceptional lifetime of advocacy. For more than 15 years, SCU has carefully selected Distinguished Advocates and brought them to campus to expose students to outstanding trial lawyers. This month, Joe Cotchett joins an impressive list of Santa Clara University's Distinguished Advocates.

For the past 10 years, the National Law Journal has named Joe Cotchett one of the 100 Most Influential Lawyers in America. In 2003, the San Francisco Chronicle named him one of the Top Ten Lawyers in the San Francisco Bay Area, saying:

The Burlingame attorney has had a star career that's not only talked about in legal circles but has made headlines around the country. Known mostly as a plaintiff lawyer, many of his cases are filed on behalf of fraud victims, and have a widows-and-orphan flavor to them.

The San Francisco/Los Angeles Daily Journal has said that Joe is "considered one of the best trial strategists in the state" who built a career out of representing the underdog against powerful interests.

One of the Nation's best trial lawyers, Joe fights for what he believes is right. Joe has won settlements for investors in white-collar fraud cases and represented numerous California public agencies, including the California State Teachers' Retirement System. He took on corrupt energy giant Enron during California's energy crisis.

Joe was the lead trial lawyer for 23,000 elderly customers in the Lincoln Savings & Loan Association debacle. After a 4-month trial, he won one of the largest jury verdicts then recorded. For his work in defense of the watchdog group Consumers Union, Trial Lawyers for Public Justice honored Joe for his "outstanding contribution to the public interest" as "Trial of the Year Finalist" in 2000.

In the 1970s, Joe was involved in early environment lawsuits to save the California coast and numerous consumer actions which laid the groundwork for many of our present consumer laws in California. In recent years, Joe has focused on financial fraud on behalf of shareholders and public pension funds.

Joe is also my appointment to the Federal Judicial Advisory Committee, which President George W. Bush, Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN, and I authorized.

It is clear that Joe is one of the top trial lawyers in the country. What is equally impressive is that while some people would have stopped there, satisfied with this outstanding accomplishment, Joe continues to give of his time and resources. And not just with worthy pro bono work.

Throughout his lifetime, Joe has been committed to fighting the good fight. From his days as a college student in the South, challenging segregation by drinking from segregated water fountains, to his work as one of nine members and chair of the California State Parks Commission; from his involvement with the Boys and Girls Club to his work with Disability Rights Advocates, which honored him in 2003 for his nearly 40 years of civil rights work, Joe's dedication to others has had an enormous reach.

Joe is deeply committed to giving back to his local community. He preserved the DeBenedetti building, a Mission Revival Style building which is very special to residents of Half Moon Bay in California. He wrote "The Lost Coast," the historical guide to the California coast between Santa Cruz and San Francisco. Joe is involved in numerous bay area charitable organizations involving animals, children, women, and minorities. He established the Cotchett Family Foundation to aid those in need.

Born in Brooklyn, Joe received his B.S. in engineering from California Polytechnic College in San Luis Obispo in 1960. He earned his J.D. from Hastings College of Law at the University of California in 1964. Joe served in the U.S. Army Intelligence Corps and was a Special Forces paratrooper and