

to Charlotte from a business meeting, Josh was seated in the emergency row's window seat. Not only was Josh integral in opening the emergency hatch after impact, but he was also helpful in reassuring passengers and assisting others, including a mother and her 9-month-old baby, up the ladder and onto the awaiting ferry. And as rescuers assisted passengers, I understand that Captain Sullenberger continued to demonstrate true heroism as he refused to deplane until all others onboard had been safely evacuated.

I again commend all who contributed to making this disastrous event a true miracle, including the first responders; volunteer organizations, such as the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army; and most of all the crew and passengers of 1549. The acts of heroism and the stories of selflessness that have emerged from this event are truly inspiring.

TRIBUTE TO MELVIN DUBEE

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, Melvin Dubee, one of the Senate's most highly valued staff members and one to whom I am personally grateful, will soon conclude two decades of government service in order to apply his considerable talents in the private sector. While I do not, for a moment, believe that this is the end of Melvin's public duties—one day a wise official will certainly summon him back to public service—it is fitting to note his accomplishments to date.

As evident to even casual observers, particularly around key Longhorn or Cowboy games, Melvin has roots in Texas, where he received at the University of Texas at Arlington a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in finance. His path to public service then included a Masters degree in international affairs from George Washington University in 1988 and two years as a Presidential management intern between 1987 and 1989.

The Presidential Management Intern Program was established by President Carter to attract to Federal service, through a national competition, outstanding individuals from a variety of disciplines who are interested in a career in Federal service. During the internship Melvin worked in the Office of the Inspector General in the Department of Defense, where he began to build expertise in defense issues that carried into his Senate work. During that time he received a congressional fellowship, which introduced him to the Senate in the office of the Senate's master teacher, my senior Senator, ROBERT BYRD, where Melvin continued to work on defense management issues.

It doesn't take long for those with whom Melvin works to be impressed by his considerable skills and calm demeanor. His audition as a Congressional Fellow led to 5 years of service as national security assistant to Senator BYRD, between 1989 and 1994. In that capacity, he advised Senator

BYRD, who was then in the midst of his distinguished leadership of the Senate Appropriations Committee, on foreign policy and defense issues. This included serving as Senator BYRD's staff representative to the Armed Services Committee, during which Melvin complemented his growing knowledge of defense issues with his impressive legislative process skills concerning hearings, markups, floor action, conference committee negotiations, and negotiations with other congressional offices and with the Executive Branch.

In 1994, Melvin began his service on the Senate Intelligence Committee. This service continued until now with brief interruptions, including a year during President Clinton's administration in the Office of National Drug Policy where he advised Director Barry McCaffrey on that office's interaction with Congress.

Melvin has contributed to the committee in a variety of positions.

As a professional staff member, which is the general entry point for our staff, Melvin developed expertise in a number of key intelligence community oversight issues, including counterdrug, counterterrorism, international organized crime issues, as well as area expertise concerning Latin America and Southeast Asia. As a professional staff member, he also served as an adviser and liaison to Senator JOHN KERRY and then to me, during the early part of my service on the committee in 2001.

One of Melvin's particular contributions during that time was leadership of the committee's investigation of the tragic April 2001 shoot-down of a U.S. missionary plane in Peru. Our report, entitled "Report on a Review of United States Assistance to Peruvian Counter-Drug Air Interdiction Efforts and the Shootdown of a Civilian Aircraft on April 20, 2001," S. Prt. 107-64, bears witness to a number of his skills. They include an ability to gather and carefully analyze facts, write accurately and clearly, help the Committee draw sound conclusions and make needed recommendations, and do so in a manner that draws bipartisan support. And, I should add, also to do all that expeditiously so that the committee was able to report publicly within 6 months of the incident.

The skills that Melvin amply demonstrated as a professional staff member led to his selection to fill two key staff management positions.

From mid-2001 through 2002, Melvin served as the committee's budget director. Our budget director post is an immensely important responsibility. The total national intelligence budget when Melvin was budget director is classified. But we have declassified the top line for the last 2 fiscal years. The most recent figure, \$47.5 billion in fiscal year 2008, conveys the importance of the task of reviewing, making recommendations about, and monitoring implementation of the Nation's intelligence budget. As budget director,

Melvin led the committee's budget monitors for each of the individual intelligence community elements in scouring the President's budget numbers and evaluating the broad span of human and technical collection, analytical, acquisition, and management issues they involve. The budget director arranges for the presentation of these issues at classified hearings of the committee, their consideration at committee markups, coordination with the Senate Armed Services and Appropriations Committees, and negotiation with the House and also with the Executive Branch. This work is at the heart of the committee's responsibilities.

Confidence in Melvin, starting with former Vice Chairman Richard Bryan in 2000 and then myself from 2003 through the 110th Congress, also led to Melvin's designation as deputy staff director, initially on the minority side and then beginning in 2007 as the committee's deputy staff director. There are two aspects of that responsibility. One is leadership within the staff, helping it to maintain the high level of professionalism and effectiveness that has been the hallmark of our Intelligence Committee staffs. The other is being a close adviser to the chairman or vice chairman, as the case may be, on the full breadth of issues relating to the oversight of the U.S. intelligence community.

In both respects, as a partner with the staff director in managing the committee and as a close adviser to me, Melvin performed magnificently. On a daily basis, I most often saw Melvin as a trusted adviser. In that role, Melvin combines key capabilities and attributes.

Melvin knows his material. This includes current intelligence and historical background. It includes detailed knowledge of the elements of the intelligence community, from the CIA, to components of the Defense Department, to intelligence elements in the State, Treasury, and Energy Departments, as well as the FBI. And it includes knowledge of the functioning of the Senate, with respect not only to the Intelligence Committee, but also to the committees with which we work, and its leadership and floor proceedings.

Melvin has an admirable ability to express his considerable knowledge succinctly and clearly. He has no hesitation in expressing disagreement or dissent, respectfully but clearly, particularly when a matter of principle is involved, as is often the case when addressing sensitive matters. When a decision is made, he has an uncanny ability to find and recommend the right words for remarks in committee, on the floor, in letters or press releases, or in speeches outside the Senate. And, in all of our endeavors, Melvin has been forever guided by a deep commitment to the protection of our Nation and our values.

It would be incomplete, however, to talk only about Melvin at work. A

glance at his wall of photographs, an opportunity to hear him talk about his family, and the chance to meet his wife and two daughters, make it clear that Melvin and his wife Kristine Johnson are loving and imaginative parents, and that Melvin's priorities have always been right on the mark. As may often be the case when someone leaves the Senate for the private sector, daughters Katrina and Eliza may find that Dad is able to get home a little earlier to join them at dinner.

With gratitude for his service to the Senate and the Nation, for myself and the many others who have benefited from it, I wish Melvin the best in the time ahead.

RETIREMENT OF H. JAMES SAXTON

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I am honored to rise today in recognition of the Honorable H. James Saxton, on the occasion of his retirement from the U.S. House of Representatives after 24 years of remarkable service to our country.

As a Representative for New Jersey's diverse Third District, Mr. Saxton was truly an advocate not only for his constituents but for New Jersey's interests, as well. Throughout his tenure, he remained an exceptional voice for environmental protection and conservation, and was a fervent advocate for our service men and women and the military bases situated in his district.

Encompassing the Jersey Shore, Pinelands Preservation, suburban communities, and countless areas of open space, the landscape of the Third District is special and complex. Mr. Saxton was a tireless fighter for protecting our waterways, preserving our open spaces, and maintaining the health of our oceans.

While New Jersey is now home to the Nation's first Mega Base, including Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base, and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station, such an installation would not be possible without the contributions of Mr. Saxton. Twice the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission chose to close down one of our bases and twice Mr. Saxton defended and defeated the measure. With the many jobs that were saved as a result of this reversal, the new Mega Base will reenergize our communities by adding even more opportunities to the area.

In addition to these and many more accomplishments, Mr. Saxton honorably served on the Armed Services Committee, the Air and Land Forces Subcommittee, the Terrorism and Unconventional Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee, the Natural Resources Committee, the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans, and the Joint Economic Committee. His dedication and commitment on behalf of his constituents has earned him the respect and admiration of his peers and colleagues.

Mr. President, I would like to recognize, commend, and applaud Mr.

Saxton in light of his extraordinary service to the U.S. House of Representatives and his unwavering dedication to the people of New Jersey's Third District.

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:

Why are we still paying foreign aid to the oil-rich [countries]? First, cut off all foreign aid, then charge them \$136 a bushel for the grain we sell them at the present price of \$7. One fact is for certain—when the food starts disappearing from our supermarket shelves, the politicians will see just how fed up we the people really are. I predict that this will be the year of the lowest voter turn-out in the history of this country, as we have no one to choose from for the office of President. Why anyone would want to lead this country into disaster is beyond me. Our government is far too big and corrupt to be changed by a mere vote. Big oil money under the table, personal agendas and the Golden Fleece retirement plan for politicians rule this country. The average citizen has been led to believe that his or her vote matters when it does not. As a sixty-year-old male who has no vision of retirement, and will surely lose my home due to foreclosure, and who will never see Social Security, I, for one, am fed up with this country and [those who seem not to care] about their voters.

GARY, Boise.

The idea of exploring and using our own energy resources is a fantastic idea and should have been done long ago. If we use our own resources, in which we have many (capped oil wells all over Texas, drilling in Alaska, Shale oil (which, by the way, is not as expensive as the oil companies claim; they just do not want to lose the revenue they are getting from the failing and antiquated system they are now using, a better Idea would be to reinstitute government control over energy and utility sectors.) I, for one, would feel a great deal better by keeping American dollars at home instead of paying billions to the oil-rich sheiks of the Midwest (in which I have no doubt what so ever that some of those funds end up in terrorists

hands.) It is far past the time for American and Americans to take control of our economic and energy future. We have the reserves and resources to do this. The big oil companies have made billions in profit the past couple of years and yet we have not seen nor have we heard anything about refitting the system so the devastation that happened with Katrina does not happen again. Our economy is driven by fuel. Fuel prices go up and the manufacturer pass that cost to the consumer, the consumer is then left with the burden of paying \$3.50 for a gallon of milk, \$2 for a dozen eggs. It was not too long ago that a gallon of gas was \$1.20. Regrettably we will never see that price again. It seems that gas prices do go down but never lower than what it was a year ago.

The big oil companies are making billions while we sit by and "watch" our economy crumble. If measures are not taken to stop this, and I mean measures in the very very very near future (not five years down the road as Sen. McCain is suggesting) I fear that we will find ourselves in the midst of another great depression. Mark my words, sir, the writing is on the wall, but this time we, and by we, I mean the American people, the Senate, and Congress can do something about it. We can start using our resources and support our economy rather than stuffing the linings of those that already have more money than God. When and where does it stop. Foreign countries already own more of America the America does. We are about to have a rude awakening and it will not be a pretty one if steps are not taken to prevent a hostile takeover of American commerce by foreign companies. All driven by the ridiculous and unnecessarily high price of fuel. I believe that it is only 14 percent of all imported fuel is turned into gas and heating oil. If that is true, why is not the cost of plastics and other petroleum-based products not skyrocketing at all? Natural gas is plentiful yet the energy companies say it costs too much to transport it. Solar power is abundant and never-ending, and the technology is fairly inexpensive, yet people do not use it. Idaho has great expanses to set up solar and wind farms. A nuclear energy company is willing to build a plant in Elmore or Owyhee County (I cannot remember which). The nuclear power plant would supply as much as 75 percent of the states, mind you, the state, not a couple of counties but the entire State of Idaho, power needs. Yet no one wants it because of all the disinformation and propaganda. The French had found a way to recycle the spent fuel rods years ago; yet, we still bury ours. The technology is out there and available. We just need to get the big oil companies hands out of the cookie jar so to speak.

I am sorry if it sounds like I am rambling on. I am just a frustrated citizen who is tired of getting the run around from the government as well as big business. Then time for talk has been over for a long time. Now is the time for action.

Thank you and God bless,

JOSE.

I work out of my home/office and not as directly impacted as 99 percent of the folks in America who commute, but our food prices are going up due to the ethanol failed policies as it do not make sense to appease mid-west farmers when more efficient Idaho sugar is better (less votes though for liberals). Here is a good summary from Center for individual freedom: (Please be a Fighter.)

When it comes to the price Americans are paying for gasoline at the pump, will conservative in Congress fight tooth and nail to increase domestic production or will they allow liberals to choke off your supply of oil and increase gas prices even higher?