

We moved from southern California and left a lucrative business four years ago to come to Idaho and put our children into smaller schools. We also began a business here that has done pretty well. Lately though, gas is eating up any chance of savings for college or cars for teens who need cars to work.

Beside working many hours and employing locals when we can, we also volunteer hundreds of hours coaching kids in youth sports. I also began an all-girls youth group 18 months ago, that has presently 40 girls that have attended and come pretty regularly. We are in a poorer area so up till now we provide many rides for these kids, many from single parent homes, welfare homes, etc. These kids have been so appreciative of all the time and effort we invest in them and we see many making much better choices today that once were traveling down a very bad path in life.

How is gas affecting us, family of five? For one, we have started turning down some pretty good jobs we would usually bid within a 90-mile radius due to gas prices. Since my husband has to drive a truck to carry all of his heavy equipment to do the jobs, he has no choice but to pay for higher gas. For me, I have to choose to not pick up all the kids that I have been to keep them in youth group and sports. Some of these parents do not even own cars, so now that means some of these kids who were responding so positively either have to walk a great deal to get to a place I can pick them up (also a danger in today's world) or they do not always get to attend. I too may have to cut my hrs in volunteering soon as we just cannot afford the gas to do as much as we always have in the past.

One more way it is affecting us is we have a son ready to begin college and he may actually have to go without a vehicle. His older car broke down and, in order to purchase an energy-efficient vehicle, we would have to give up paying for college basically. We cannot afford to do both. We have another son also driving, but he cannot afford the gas prices to get to a job at minimum wage on a part-time basis. He works for his dad all summer, but gas prices is preventing him from working all school year for the minimum wage on a part-time basis (15 hr average locally for youth jobs during school year).

We ask the Congress to push harder to drill here at home, to open another refinery while they continue exploring all other energy efficient ideas. We too want the environment protected, but first we must make certain people can afford to go to school and to work. We do think the congress needs to put some pressure on and get our gas prices lowered (environmentalist caused in our opinions), but we do not believe the government should be taking over the oil companies.

We thank you for your time and hope that you can work to get this resolved before none of us are able to work.

KEN and ROSSA, *Lenore*.

I wanted to write you about the insanely high price of gas. My wife and I both hold jobs in different parts of Boise so we could not carpool together. Her car gets great gas mileage; mine, on the other hand, does not. When the price of gas going up, I was looking at paying almost \$200 in fuel a month for my own transportation probably closer to \$300 with both of our cars together. We simply cannot afford \$300 a month for just gas. I decided to find a new means of transportation to work—my bicycle. While I am not complaining about riding my bike to work, I have to keep looking down the road and know that winter is coming and with \$135 barrel of oil prices that means high gas prices when it is cold out, too. Congress or

the House or the President or someone needs to take the reins and get control over this crisis. I keep hearing about how we went to war in Iraq for oil. If that is true, then why are not we taking oil out of Iraq to repay all the money that we have spent over there to increase our national debt to an insane amount? Why are we not drilling in Alaska? Or on the Outer Continental Shelf? Or exploring the coal to oil possibility? With all of the unemployment that is happening right now in our country opening up even one of these possibilities could create new jobs for people that are out of work right now, bring down the price of gas and oil, and we could stop funding countries that hate America. I do not understand how simple working Americans can see the solutions to this problem but our elected officials either cannot see the solutions or just do not care to fix the problem they helped to create. Thank you for your time.

KYLE, *Boise*.

Despite the fact that a month ago I have recently acquired a higher paying job (more than I have ever made), we are having to now decide which bills get paid and which ones do not. My fiancée and I over the past few years, worked diligently to reduce or eliminate our debt, save money for both short term and long term. We were being very responsible middle Americans.

We have not been able to successfully budget the increases in what we have to pay for gas and everything else that has gone up in price.

Now all that our debts have gone up and our emergency funds our depleted.

It is not as though we have been spending more. We have made as many cutbacks as we could. Gotten rid of cable, switched all of our bulbs to fluorescent, do not go out to eat anymore, and quality time family excursions including movies just do not happen anymore.

What else do we do when suddenly prices go up and you have to get to work, but the tank is empty and bills need paid or they shut off the power, etc.? Companies never give you a raise as quickly as prices go up. In fact, most people do not even get raises anymore. We are paying on average of \$150 to \$200 more a month than before. We do have to drive more than the average person until the wedding over and house is sold.

I already work long hours, leave the house at 6:45 am to arrive back at 7 pm exhausted go to bed at 10 pm. When would I have time to get another job? We have been selling off things we own for extra money. We have not had time to adjust. These rapid increases are killing us financially.

MONTE.

I am taking this opportunity to respond to you call for input on high energy prices. I live in Pocatello and must drive to work daily to go to work in Idaho Falls, a 100-mile round trip. My wife owns a restaurant in Pocatello, so moving would only change who commutes. The high gasoline prices have affected my personal driving habits in that I have started driving at 55 miles per hour again. If I drive at 75 mph, my car will go 19 to 20 miles per gallon of gasoline. I have found that when I drive at 55 mph, my car will go 32 to 34 miles per gallon. I only have to leave the house 15 minutes earlier in the morning to get to work on time.

I was in Nebraska a few weeks ago. I noticed that while Nebraska has not lowered posted speed limit for trucks, almost all trucks were cruising between 60 and 65 mph. Since a truck is much less streamlined, I would guess that their fuel efficiency gains are even more dramatic than mine.

I realize that, for most Americans, the vast majority of driving is done in a city where

the speeds are much lower and the traffic is stop and go, so simply driving slower will not have a significant impact on fuel efficiency. But gasoline use can be greatly reduced in urban areas also. I have two sons who both get all over Pocatello very easily, and neither one of them drives an average of ten miles a week. They both walk or ride bicycles almost everywhere they go. They even takes backpacks to the grocery store and laundromats, which for one of them are over a mile and a half from his house (the other lives only around the corner from a grocery store, and his laundry seems to mysteriously appear at my house).

I do believe that urban planners in the West have long neglected pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and business districts, not to mention the almost complete lack of attention towards mass transit systems both in and between urban areas. Congress should address these items as viable tools to curb energy demand along with promoting development of alternative energy sources. Congress should also mandate the diversification of our energy supply, which, by the way, should also be a Homeland Security priority.

Congress has known that our energy availability is getting more and more questionable for over thirty years, and has done little to promote developing new energy resources or promote curbing energy use. Simply exploring for more oil within the United States will not solve the problems, it will only prolong the problem at great cost.

BOB.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO ST. XAVIER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Nathan Horrell and Will Spence from St. Xavier High School, Louisville, KY, for receiving the Achievement Award in writing. This year only 525 students around the country were recipients of this award.

The Achievement Award in writing is given to students who show excellence in English and writing. To be eligible for the award, students must submit a previously written paper and then be invited to participate in a timed essay.

Nathan Horrell and Will Spence both have shown great analytical and writing skills in their submitted papers. Each student entered an analysis of Mary Shelley's 1818 novel "Frankenstein," which they both wrote during their junior year in high school. At the contest, Nathan wrote his timed essay on the connection between the Internet and politics and Will wrote a short story.

I am impressed by the excellence these two students have displayed. I am confident that they will have success in greater challenges in the future.

Mr. President, I would like to thank Nathan Horrell and Will Spence for their contributions to the Commonwealth of Kentucky and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors.●

##### TRIBUTE TO COLONEL ALVA BRYAN "RED" LASSWELL

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a man from Arkansas