

In addition, the Internal Markets and Consumer Protection Committee, IMCO, of the European Parliament approved a prohibition on trade in seal products in the European Union. This measure may now be considered by the full European Parliament in the coming months.

Yet, in Canada, the largest commercial slaughter of marine mammals in the world continues. According to the Humane Society of the United States, HSUS, over one million seals have been killed over the past 4 years. In Canada, seal pups as young as 12 days old can legally be killed. The vast majority of seals killed in these hunts are between 12 days and 12 weeks of age.

Canada has officially opened another seal hunting season, paving the way for hundreds of thousands of baby seals to be killed for their fur in the coming weeks, when the harp seal hunt begins in earnest. I am pleased to have been joined by Senator COLLINS in submitting this resolution that urges the Government of Canada to end this senseless and inhumane slaughter.

The U.S. Government has opposed this senseless slaughter, as noted in the January 19, 2005, letter from the U.S. Department of State, in response to a letter Senator COLLINS and I wrote to President Bush, urging him to raise this issue during his November 30, 2004, visit with Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin. The letter reads, in part, as follows: "The United States has made known to the Government of Canada its objections and the objections of concerned American legislators and citizens to the Canadian commercial seal hunt on numerous occasions over recent years. The United States has also opposed Canada's efforts within the Arctic Council to promote trade in sealskins and other marine mammal products."

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the New York Times article of March 19, 2009, entitled "Russia to Ban Hunting Baby Seals" be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

RUSSIA TO BAN HUNTING OF BABY SEALS

(By A.G. Sulzberger, Mar. 19, 2009)

Russia announced on Wednesday that it would ban the hunting of baby seals, effectively shutting one of the world's largest hunting grounds in the controversial trade in seal fur.

The decision is yet another blow to an age-old industry that has been losing a public relations battle in recent years to animal-rights groups, who have gained public support by using stark photographs of harp seal pups less than a month old being clubbed to death on blood-stained ice flows.

In addition, the European Union is considering a ban of all seal products—similar to one that the United States adopted decades ago—which would eliminate a key trade route and end market for the furs. And even in Canada, where the world's largest seal hunt is scheduled to begin later this month and top leaders vigorously defend the industry, a legislator for the first time introduced a proposal to curtail sealing.

"It's highly significant," Rebecca Aldworth, director of Humane Society International in Canada, said of the political developments. "It shows that world opinion is moving away from commercial seal hunting. There's hope on the horizon that this may be the last year that we ever have to witness this cruelty."

In Russia, where the number of new pups has dropped sharply in recent years because of the hunts as well as shrinking ice in the White Sea, the government initially announced a ban on the killing of the very youngest and most highly prized seals, known as "whitecoats." The seals shed the white fur in about two weeks, with the resulting silver coat also coveted.

But the government announced in unsparring language that it intended to extend the ban to include all seals less than a year old. (While adult seals are also hunted in smaller quantities, their coarse, scarred fur is generally not used in clothing.) The move, publicly backed by Prime Minister Vladimir V. Putin and coming just weeks before the hunting season was to begin, could save as many as 35,000 seals, according to a spokesman for the International Fund for Animal Welfare.

The Associated Press quoted the natural resources minister, Yuri Trutnev, as saying in a statement: "The bloody sight of the hunting of seals, the slaughter of these defenseless animals, which you cannot even call a real hunt, is banned in our country, just as well as in most developed countries, and this is a serious step to protect the biodiversity of the Russian Federation."

Masha Vorontsova, the head of the International Fund for Animal Welfare in Russia and a biologist who has been pushing for a ban since the fall of the Soviet Union, credited an outpouring of public support for ending the hunt. "It's a fantastic achievement," she said.

In contrast, Gail Shea, Canada's Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, did little to disguise her frustration at moves taking aim at the industry both abroad and at home, which she attributed to "mistruths and propaganda" spread by special interest groups. "For some reason the European Union will not recognize what the actual facts are because it's an emotional issue and a political issue," she said in an interview.

Ms. Shea, who earlier flew to Europe to lobby against a European Union ban, warned that such a move could violate international trade law. An industry spokesman said that nearly all Canadian seal products passed through Europe on their way to major consumers like Norway, Russia and China. It is unclear whether Russia will also ban the import and sale of seal products.

Commercial sealing also takes place in a handful of other countries, including Norway, Greenland and Namibia. In Canada, last year's catch of 207,000 seals—or roughly one in every five pups born that year—earned the roughly 6,000 licensed sealers a total of \$7 million, down from \$33 million in 2006, according to Phil Jenkins, a spokesman for the Canadian fisheries department. The hunting decreased, he said, largely because of a sharp drop in prices for the pelts, from \$97 to \$33, for a perfect specimen. Seals are killed by rifle or by club.

The harp seal population level has held steady at about 5.6 million for the last decade, he said, but anti-sealing groups contest that figure.

However, the Canadian industry came under rare official scrutiny last week, when Mac Harb, a senator from Ontario, introduced the legislation to cancel the coming hunt. He argued that the industry was dying, propped up by public tax dollars and costing Canada international good will. But his pro-

posal died when Mr. Harb could not get another member to second his motion.

"There was silence. Total silence!" he said in a telephone interview on Wednesday. "I was amazed that not one of my colleagues, from any one of the political parties, would even want to debate the issue."

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:

I am a Meridian resident, who works in Boise, an 8-mile commute for me. I own a 2003 Dodge Dakota, and it was my commuter vehicle until a couple months back. It has a fuel capacity of 23 gallons. Before I stopped driving my truck, it was costing me about \$160 per month in gas . . . just for me to get to and from work—8 miles away. That is before gas went over \$4/gallon. The reason I do not have to drive my truck anymore, is because my wife got a new job in Boise, a mile from my workplace, and we are now able to carpool together in her car, a 2003 Mazda 6. Previously, she worked in Meridian, just a couple miles from our home. My wife hates driving the truck, which is why I drove it, instead of her.

Since my wife got her new job nearly two months ago, my truck has just sat in the garage. I filled it up 6-8 weeks ago—and it still has the same full tank of gas. It hasn't moved an inch. How can I afford to move it, when it only gets 12-16 mpg, and gas is now hovering between \$4.10-\$4.15 a gallon? If I was still driving my truck to work, it would now be costing about \$200 a month just to commute back and forth to work. Ridiculous. So my truck sits and waits for something to cause fuel prices to go down.

Now for the possible solution I read about the other day. SwiftFuel: I saw a blurb on it on the website, <http://slashdot.org>, which had a link to a full article by Robert X. Cringly on PBS' website. Basically, SwiftFuel is made from ethanol, but contains no ethanol. It is currently being tested by the FAA as a replacement fuel for the current lead based aviation fuels, which must cease to exist in 2010. It has a higher octane rating (about 104); has more energy per gallon, which results in a 15-20 percent increase in fuel efficiency; can be run on existing engines without modification; can be stored in the same

tanks and shipped in the same pipelines as gasoline; and since it is a biomass, has a net 0 carbon footprint on the environment. Oh, the ethanol used to make it—it is not produced from corn. It is produced from sorghum which produces six times more ethanol than corn, per acre. No higher food costs from the production of its ethanol. Currently, SwiftFuel costs about \$1.80 to produce, and we can make it right here, in the good ol' U. S. of A.

Obviously, this is just one article, and one side. But if most of what this article claims is true, this could be a very viable, quick remedy to breaking our addiction to oil. Everyone could benefit from it immediately, without having to buy new cars, or paying for expensive modifications. I think it deserves a very serious look from the Government, and I hope you will encourage other lawmakers to look into it.

If it makes it to our local pumps, my Dakota can come out of the garage and play.

JARED.

Thank you for all you are doing to keep energy prices, costs, and options open.

Our family is spread all over the country because we gave them wings to fly. Giving them independence sometimes means higher costs for visits. When my husband and I married in 1967, the Viet Nam War was the countries overseas involvement. Since then so many, many more overseas events have affected our society.

Being part of a world economy is a challenge. I think our country will be challenged beyond our wildest dreams and people from all over the world will be meeting our expectations of being like us. That is not all good. One of the things is energy and high cost of traveling. Staying close to home will be the only option for most people in our world and probably not a bad thing.

I would hope that other energy options will finally come out and be fully embraced by the government with incentives and with financial responsibilities that all Americans can understand and live with.

We will need another post World War II plan of some sort to put people to work, give them self esteem to continue to work things out.

With our medical crisis, overseas wars, and societal morality issues we face a time of great challenge!

I hope that you and others in Washington will take the time off and spend time at home and have smaller salaries so we as Americans can have examples of sacrifice and fiscal responsibly.

Thank you for your service to our state and our country. I look forward to the next four years and hopefully we will have a more responsible White House and legislative sessions!

NANCY.

As you have heard from many sources, the high energy costs are providing difficult choices: food or gas, rent or gas, mortgage or gas, utilities or gas, medicine or gas, etc. I just read the results of a survey that indicated that 76% of respondents say that the country is headed the wrong way. This is not only a White House issue. This is a White House and Congress issue. All I see reported is finger pointing; one party blaming the other or the White House. It is time to put aside partisan bickering and seek for bipartisan solutions. OPEC is creating a false supply shortage due to lack of daily production. Oil companies must share the blame.

Refineries are creating a false supply shortage by not producing to their capacity. They post record profits but do nothing to increase refinery capacity or build new refineries. Oil production in the United States can and must increase.

Conservation by the American people is a must. A change in my driving habits has resulted in a 3 miles per gallon increase. I drive twenty miles a day to and from work. One road posts 65 mph. I drive 55 mph. I coast up to stop signs where safely possible. Where safely possible, I drive 55 miles per hour instead of 65, or 65 instead of 75. One can only imagine what would happen if every driver in America would increase their miles per gallon by changing driving habits.

Demand would definitely decrease which should have a positive effect on supply. But, unfortunately, the American people will not conserve on their own. The congress must force conservation. During the early 1970s, America faced an oil crisis. One of the measures the government instituted was lowering the speed limit to 55 miles per hour. Not only did this action reduce demand, it saved lives. This seems to be an inexpensive option. The only cost to the government, as I see it, is in putting up new speed limit signs.

The interesting thing to me is that the American public have driven one billion miles less this year compared to last year, yet the price of gas continues to rise. It makes one wonder what kind of coalition has been created to keep supply down and prices up in spite of the minimal conservation efforts of the American people. Does anything the American people say really carry any weight with our government?

I know that this is a complex problem. Some stop-gap measures need to be put in place while long-term solutions are reached. Now would be a good time for Congress to step up to the plate and hit a grand slam to win the game for the American people.

R.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my concern about the rising energy costs in our country. I have a 2001 Toyota Camry and when I first bought the car it cost between \$12 and \$15 to fill the tank. Last Friday I filled it and it was \$56.03! From \$15 to \$56, and the news says the price of gas is still rising!

In the past, whenever something was totally out of control in our country, we could count on our leaders to do something about it. Gas prices have gone up before (but never to this extent) and then came back down? I always felt safe and secure in the United States but now things seem to be totally out of control. Where are our leaders/Senate? What are they doing to help us? With the extremely high gas prices everything else is going up, too. So much so that we all are being forced to cut back everywhere else—even in critical areas such as food and/or medicine. Living in Idaho does not give me an option on not driving my car to work and I have to work in order to survive. I do not want to quit work and be supported by welfare, or any other assistance, simply because I cannot get to work. I am disabled and cannot ride a bicycle to work (which will not work in Idaho during the winter, either).

After a horrific divorce, I struggled many, many years as a single woman to get my feet on the ground and be self-sufficient. It terrifies me to think that security can easily be taken away from me.

Where in the world did the United States ever get the notion we could be dependent on foreign countries for energy? That is absolutely ridiculous! We are supposed to be the leader of the free world, not depending on other countries to survive. We have resources on our own soil so why are we not using them? What is happening with the reserve oil? As the Senate, I implore you to please do something to stop the rising gas prices and get them lowered again!

CONNIE, *Post Falls*.

I am a non-traditional student at BSU. I depend on grants and loans to attend college

and only work part-time as a tutor on campus. I live relatively close to campus so I can walk or take the bus if need be, but so far I have not had to. The real story I wanted to share is why I am not bothered with the rising prices of gas as much as everyone else seems to be.

I was in the US Army from 1968 to 1972 and served in Germany from the fall of 1968 to the spring of 1970. Gas prices in Germany, at that time, after converting from the old Mark to US dollars, were about \$3.65 a gallon. We have been very fortunate to have cheap prices for as long as we have. Now it is our turn to pay up.

I would say to Congress: Shame on you for not allowing the drilling of more oil reserves in those areas of our country that have it, for you are keeping us dependent upon OPEC and keep us at the mercy of their pocket book needs. I also would ask Congress to seriously consider tholium research to replace uranium in our reactors, for it is considerably more economical, safer for the environment and would go a long way to promote anti-proliferation by terrorists.

KERMIT.

My husband works in construction. The good news is: He has had job after job out at the nuclear site west of Idaho Falls. The bad news is: Construction workers do not get to ride the buses. They have to drive out themselves, unless they are lucky enough to work for a company that carpools their men in a company truck. That is not happening right now. Gary drives out to work every day. Even with a fuel stipend to offset his gas purchases each week, we are going in deeper and deeper because of the rising fuel prices. I am sure construction companies can only afford to offset just so much for their employees. It will cap out and we will be left making up the difference. After all, we have to keep Gary working. For my job, I travel the upper Snake River Valley, making visits in the homes of adult clients with developmental disabilities. I am required by the state Medicaid to make these monthly visits. I drive a fairly fuel efficient vehicle, but again, our miscellaneous expense budget has been hacked by increases expense at the fuel pump.

I am so hoping the government will explore and implement domestic oil production. Get these foreign countries off our backs! They are grinding the faces of the American citizen into the pavement. Of course, I am in favor of expanded nuclear energy research. We here in southeast Idaho have grown up with the nuclear site in our backyard. Incentives for conservation may help, but do not let too much red tape bind the effectiveness of the incentive or companies will not feel it is worth it. I repeat, the environmentalists have had their day and now we are suffering for it. They need to quiet down and let business address the issues of the American family trying to survive in the United States.

Thank you for your interest in our story.

GARY and JANA.

The increase in prices caused by an increase in demand is not a valid cause for increasing the pressure put on the environment by our society's increasing demand for high quality energy. The price increase is a result of capitalism—imagine that, the U.S. has promoted a change in world economy to be more like ours and it has worked. More demand translates to higher prices. The stock brokers are now speculating on energy futures.

So the solution is efficiency. Start carpooling. The demand could be reduced if people rode together to work and school in their current vehicles. As new vehicles are purchased, energy efficient machines could be

purchased instead of the CAFE loop-hole SUVs that the current federal government still subsidizes. Also the speed limit could be reduced. Yes, all the machines on the freeways are more efficient at lower speeds. It is just physics. Then reduce the need for energy by reducing the demand for AC and Heating because of the unrealistic size of homes. Start programs to subsidize development of solar electric to AC systems in the sunbelt of the U.S. Such a program would significantly reduce the electric grid demand.

The answer to the impact of energy prices could be altered immediately through conservation, not 5 years from now by increases in exploration.

DALE, *Coeur d'Alene*.

We are writing to express our complete asperation with the U.S. Congress' inaction on vital energy questions or maybe it is a not so subtle attempt to ruin our way of life. We and our neighbors live about 70 miles from adequate shopping and medical services. We spend about \$30 for gasoline for each round trip. Ours is a poor, rural community where many people have to commute long distances to work and whose budgets are being wrecked by the current cost of gasoline and diesel fuel. Being a community of mostly self-sufficient, hardworking people who do not have time to publicly complain or demonstrate, we seldom have the opportunity to be heard. We appreciate your invitation to let us express our frustrations.

We believe that election year politics is important but that an issue so vital as energy supplies should be something that our representatives should agree upon. Have we reached a point where the elite of our society are so powerful that the pain felt by everyday citizens is of no importance when balanced against their idealistic agendas?

I am a retired engineer with adequate retirement reserves, and \$4 a gallon gasoline will not bankrupt me. Most of my neighbors are not so fortunate and will be strapped to ever achieve adequate retirement finances if fuel costs and the increased cost of products due to fuel costs are not addressed. The ability to save is being destroyed for the average citizen by increased fuel costs.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to state my opinions. I hope that you will do all that is possible for you to do to ease this burden. We are in favor of drilling for oil both in ANWR and offshore. We are also in favor of nuclear energy. It is the fuel of the future and again we are letting a few loudmouthed elitists dictate policy and add to the hardships of the people who make the country work.

KAREN and ROY, *Orofino*.

I suspect that you have heard quite a few stories about how rising energy costs have impacted Idahoans lives. I want to tell you how mine has been changed. I work at the INL (Idaho National Laboratory) for the CCP (Central Characterization Project) on the ICP (Idaho Cleanup Project). I tried riding the bus service that the site has provided for decades. At the end of last year, the fuel prices prompted a change in the cost of a bus pass from approx \$11 a week—more than doubling (I believe) to almost \$23 a week. I no longer ride the bus but ride with a co-worker who has been forced to drive because it is cheaper for he and his wife who both work on the ICP to drive than to ride the bus. He is gracious and insists that I do not pay my share of fuel costs or the maintenance on his car. I have filled the car's fuel tank twice, and each time I was caught off guard by my upset wife telling me that the lack of that money was going to cut down on food and other things that we have necessity for in our home. I have been very blessed by the

hands of God in which our country and state reside. My family has never gone hungry, but I truly have to hope now that we never will. If there can be a way to improve the value of the dollar, to lower the price in gas (or even maintain it at the ridiculous price that it is currently at), then myself and many other Idahoans and Americans would be greatly appreciative. I continue to support those who are making wise decisions for the people of the United States, and continue to pray to God that he will preserve me and my family from harder times.

STEPHAN.

My husband and I both are retired. We recently bought a Silverado pick-up in February, almost \$32,000. Do you think we would have bought that had we seen the gas crisis coming? Heavens no! We were going to buy a travel trailer for it to hitch and explore our nation. That thought is completely gone. We have six children, three of whom are married with children, with double incomes to make ends meet. Now, that is all we can do—make ends meet. We are all surviving and, thank God, we are a resourceful nation. We bought a 32 mpg Chevy, and one son bought a motorcycle to commute to work, but we just do not go shopping. We are all making it, but groceries and gasoline seem to be taking our checks. I am worried about the other businesses of our nation who have depended a bit on our incomes. What about them? Start drilling! We are worth more than what we are being handed by the radical environmentalists. God is the one who selects plants and animals for extinction, not us. If he chooses, they could be gone tomorrow no matter what we do. Start drilling!

VAL.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING HARTLEY'S CHRYSLER DODGE JEEP GMC

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, as we heard in testimony before the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship last week, auto dealerships are struggling to sell cars in this difficult economy. One of our witnesses remarked that in a healthy economy, auto sales make up approximately 20 percent of our country's retail spending. Clearly, a healthy automobile industry is critical to our economic success. I rise this week to recognize Hartley Chrysler Dodge Jeep GMC, an outstanding auto dealership from my home State of Maine that has remained true to its longstanding commitment to serving its customers and its community, regardless of economic conditions.

Located in the central Maine town of Newport, Hartley's Chrysler Dodge Jeep GMC is a second-generation family-owned small business. Hartley's opened its doors in 1946, when Perley Hartley began selling used vehicles from a filling station in the neighboring town of Corinna. In 1960, the dealership started selling new cars, adding Chrysler and Plymouth as its first automobile lines.

A year after graduating from Eastern Maine Community College in the early 1970s, Steven H. Hartley, now the company's president, went to work for his

father in the sales department at Hartley Motors in the town of Dexter. He eventually bought the original dealership from his uncle Perley and took over operations in 1983, when he moved the business to its current location in Newport. Since then, Steven Hartley has ensured that the dealership is profitable every year. For the company's dedicated work, Hartley's received Daimler/Chrysler's five-star elite dealership status in 2005, an honor held by only two dealerships across Maine.

Mr. Hartley donates his time to promoting the well-being of the entire auto dealer industry throughout Maine and New England. He is a former director of the New England Chrysler Ad Association, and presently serves as a director on the New England Dodge Ad Association. Mr. Hartley also contributes his time and talents as a Director at the Maine Auto Dealers, and a trustee for the Maine Auto Dealers health and insurance trust.

In addition to his business and professional accomplishments, Steven Hartley is a Master Mason and a member of the Shriners. Additionally, Mr. Hartley has served for 20 years as a volunteer firefighter for the Corinna Fire Department, even attaining the rank of department chief. Late last year, he was one of just 49 automobile dealers out of more than 19,500 nationwide that were nominated for the TIME Magazine Dealer of the Year award. Through this nomination, he garnered national recognition at the National Automobile Dealers Association Convention and Exposition in January, where he was honored by TIME and the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company for his honorable community contributions and his service to the auto dealer industry.

Driving his dealership to a whole new level of success, Steven Hartley has led Hartley's Chrysler Dodge Jeep GMC to the top of the industry and the forefront of the community. Entrepreneurs like Mr. Hartley are striving to ensure that our Nation's auto dealerships are here to stay, and we owe them a debt of gratitude. Congratulations to Steven H. Hartley on his most recent accolades, and I wish everyone at Hartley's Chrysler Dodge Jeep GMC a prosperous year.●

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.)