

bills. We have an all electric home and electricity has also went way up in price. We watch propane and natural gas to see if it would be better for us to change, but they have also skyrocketed and just the cost of changing is unaffordable. We also live in fear of losing our Social Security and Medicare because they want to privatize it.

I think what you say you are trying to do now is the right thing but why did not you do this sooner before the tax cut for the rich oil companies was put in force and why do not you speak up and stop these tax cuts from becoming permanent. This is part of what is putting the squeeze on the American people. Thank you very much for giving me the chance to express my opinion.

LOIS.

I concur with policies that will take advantage of wind and solar power technologies, and renewable/alternative fuels. I wish you would reconsider the use of nuclear reactors as I am concerned for our safety and the waste disposable. Without a doubt, we (USA) need to take action ASAP please pass legislation so that we can start using our oil reserves but also start investing in new technologies so that some day we will not need oil all together. I have confidence in our abilities to get this done but it has to have the support of our government and you are in the position to help make a difference to help make the USA a better place to live. Thank you for your time.

UNSIGNED.

I recently traded my 4-wheel-drive Toyota pickup with 35,000 miles on it for a Toyota Camry that gets ten more miles per gallon. I was looking for a 2008 Camry LE 4-cylinder. There were none in stock. All sold out! The 2009 models are in now. The dealership Tom Scott Motors told me all the 4-cylinders were sold by the time gas prices hit \$3.50 per gallon. And the V6s were not selling. Two dealerships offered me \$1,000 to \$3,000 less than my pickup was worth as per Kelly Blue book citing the 4-wheel-drive gas guzzler option was the problem. They said I was lucky I was trading a Toyota and not a full-sized truck. They are not even taking them in trade now and, if they do, the offer is \$8,000 to \$9,000 back of Kelly Blue Book. I got \$13,750 for my trade. In March when gas was \$3.00. It was worth \$16,775 cash.

You know, it is the politicians that created this theft of Idaho assets in this regard. I am not convinced the politicians will resolve it any time soon. They should have started drilling and building refineries in the 1990s. But good luck with your efforts.

PERRY, *Meridian*.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA NORRIS

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, late this fall, my longest-serving staff member, Linda Norris, will be retiring from my staff. Linda has provided 18 years of professional, tireless and dedicated service to the people of Idaho, first as a member of my first House campaign staff in the early 1990s, then as my regional director in Twin Falls, ID, and my State director of constituent services on my Senate staff while retaining her position as Twin Falls regional director. She spent the last few years here in my Washington, DC, office, finishing her time on my staff in her function as State director of constituent services. Linda has consistently worked long hours over the years, and helped me immeasurably by her excel-

lence in the field of constituent and community services and military and veteran relations.

When I met Linda in 1991, I was beginning my bid for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, representing the Second Congressional District of Idaho. She asked me very direct questions about my stand on issues, my goals were I to be elected, and my priorities. She vetted me. Once she was satisfied that I met her standards, she offered to take over regional operations for my campaign in south central Idaho in the Magic Valley and Sun Valley area. That began what was to be a highly successful working relationship of close to two decades, and a close personal friendship of a lifetime for me, my wife and family.

Linda has worked diligently on every task that she took on, either given to her or ideas she pursued independently. She has been involved in land issues, helping as we negotiated sensitive access and conservation policies with the tribes, the Air Force, the Idaho Department of Lands, private entities and the counties in the 1990s. She was my office liaison for the Harriman hiking trail in Sun Valley that finally was completed just a few years ago. A nurse by training, Linda is the reason why I became so closely involved in domestic violence issues. She was the first to crystallize the issue by arranging for me to visit a safe house where I met two children physically and emotionally devastated by brutality in their home. At that moment, I pledged to do all I could to work toward eliminating this terrible violence that occurs in too many homes across the United States and beyond.

Linda has a special place in her heart for the military and for veterans. As an Army spouse, she brought a special sense of empathy to her work, together with an extraordinarily perceptive understanding of protocol that goes a long way in ensuring that a Member of Congress's office maintains a positive relationship with Department of Defense officials. The importance of this cannot be understated when it comes to helping Idaho military members and veterans when they have questions or concerns about military and veterans' affairs issues. Linda leaves my office held in very high esteem by both Idaho and national military and veterans affairs officials. Linda also has been solely responsible for the past 15 years for the military academy nomination process in my office. The other members of the Idaho delegation have even advised new staff members to talk to her about the proper procedures and protocol for this complicated and very important process. And, close to 10 years ago, Linda suggested that I create the Spirit of Idaho and Spirit of Freedom awards. The Spirit of Idaho award recognizes extraordinary efforts of Idahoans for community service performed outside of their work life. The Spirit of Freedom Award is one that I present annually to veterans and vol-

unteers for their service to our country and to veterans.

Linda has worked behind the scenes, helping countless constituents when they encounter difficulties with federal agency processes and procedures. She has done everything from facilitate a faster passport application, to helping a number of Idahoans receive Purple Hearts and other military awards, and even helped family members obtain them for relatives long deceased. Linda has celebrated with people who have had long-term problems resolved and cried with mothers who have gotten frightening, desperate calls from a son or daughter deployed overseas and going through bouts of depression or worse. Through it all, she has maintained her composure, professionalism and judicious compassion. Linda also has a reputation for being a patient teacher and mentor. She has provided new staff members with effective training and advice.

In all the years Linda has worked for me, she has put Idahoans first and strictly adhered to the ethical and moral requirements of congressional staff work. I could ask for no better service nor could Idahoans. Linda Norris will be missed by staff and constituents alike, and I will miss her professional counsel and hard work. Fortunately, my wife and I have years of her friendship to look forward to, and she knows that Susan and I wish her the best as she begins a new and different journey in her life.

ADOPTION AND CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I would like to talk about the history of adoption and child welfare policy and the importance of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 which passed in wrap-up on Monday, September 22, 2008.

First, I want to commend Chairman BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY and their professional staffs who have done incredible work to forge a consensus and develop this bold package. Subcommittee Chairman MCDERMOTT and Congressman WELLER and their staffs showed the same leadership and commitment in the House. It was a privilege to be part of the process. This is a strong package with extraordinary broad-based support from the adoption community, child advocates, and even State groups. That consensus was essential to move the legislation and act on behalf of vulnerable children in foster care.

This strong bipartisan, bicameral package will help promote adoption, support guardianship, and improve the outcomes in foster care. The package and the process build on the legacy of the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act. In 1997, a bipartisan group came together and developed legislation that started the adoption incentive program, an initiative that spurred genuine change in the child welfare system