

social worker stated that she immediately noted a glistening in the eye of the foster mother who replied, "Is that really what you want, Christopher?" Christopher responded that was very much his desire. The adoption of Christopher was finalized in January 2008 with Christopher changing his name to "Kantrell." Kantrell has continued to thrive in his adoptive home and is a delight to all who know him.

Each year, 79,000 children and youth who exit foster care leave without a permanent home or belonging to a family. I could stand here every day for the next month and talk about each child who needs to be adopted out of foster care. The bottom line is that each of these children, from 1 day old to 22 years old, needs permanency. They all need a loving, nurturing family that will help them to grow, bring out their unique personalities, and transform them into confident and happy adults.

On National Adoption Day, I have faith that we can be the catalyst to securing a permanent loving family for every child. The miracle of adoption cannot be explained, but the loving parents who are holding their children for the first time today are living examples of how dreams can be realized. As an adoptive mother myself, I find that words cannot adequately explain the miracle of adoption. I can only take a moment to offer my most humble thanks, gratitude, and appreciation to all those across the Nation who have given their Saturday to help find waiting children safe and loving homes.

Let us continue to remember that when National Adoption Month and Day end there are still thousands of children who need that sense of permanency. I challenge Congress to make these children their first priority and not another statistic to be studied. Please join us in supporting National Adoption Day and National Adoption Month by participating in events held across the country celebrating this most joyous, hopeful act.

HIGHER EDUCATION LOANS

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, this past August the President signed into law the Higher Education Opportunity Act which reauthorized programs for postsecondary and higher education. Contained within the reauthorization is the Education Disaster and Emergency Relief Loan Program. The bill established a loan program within the U.S. Department of Education to provide critically needed low-interest guaranteed loans to institutions in the event of catastrophic natural or man-made disasters.

The colleges and universities in Louisiana, particularly those in the New Orleans area, remain in many ways financially crippled by Hurricane Katrina. Three years after Katrina and Rita devastated Louisiana and Mississippi these institutions still have nearly \$700 million in unrecovered losses. The estimates for Gustav and

Ike are still not finalized, but at this stage the damage is purported to be at least \$46 million to State colleges and universities alone.

Before Katrina, the 11 colleges and universities in the New Orleans area educated 70,000 students. Today, that number is only 50,000, but it continues to slowly rebound. This growth comes despite the fact that our institutions of higher education experienced more than \$1 billion in physical damages and operational losses due to the 2005 hurricanes and have recovered less than half of those losses. Higher education institutions are the largest employers in New Orleans both before and after Katrina. The higher education industry in New Orleans continues to attract millions of research dollars and supports industries as diverse as biotechnology, aerospace, and medicine. The work of each institution in the city can be seen in every aspect of the region's recovery, from the redesign of the city's troubled public schools to coastal restoration and hurricane protection to the provision of health care across the region. They engage in this important work even as they continue to struggle with mounting revenue losses, buildings that remain in disrepair due to flooding, and the loss of key faculty and staff.

I call today on the Secretary of Education to make the Education Disaster Loan Program a top regulatory priority. It is my understanding that some Department of Education officials have said that they will not promulgate regulations on any newly created programs in the Higher Education Act until funds are appropriated. This simply is not acceptable. This issue has become a major roadblock in the current disaster funding process, and it is my hope that the Secretary and the Department will move expeditiously to establish regulations so that the program may provide crucial assistance to the colleges and universities impacted by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, and the Midwest floods.

PRIVACY PROTECTIONS—S. 2321

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased to announce that, today, after several discussions, the Bush administration and lead sponsors of the E-Government Reauthorization Act of 2008, S. 2321, have accepted an amendment I have drafted to ensure that Americans' privacy comes first when the Government purchases and uses their most sensitive personal information. My amendment requires that Federal agencies must conduct privacy impact assessments before employing outside contractors that use and market Americans' sensitive personal data.

The addition of privacy protections to the E-Government Reauthorization Act will help to better protect all Americans from the growing threats of data breaches, identity theft, and other cyber crimes. I am particularly pleased about the compromise reached today

because I am a proud supporter of this bill. In 2002, I was an original cosponsor of E-Government Act, and in the intervening years, I have worked to promote and strengthen this law.

The E-Government Reauthorization Act is a good bill that will now be even better because of the privacy protections added by my amendment. Recently, the Government Accountability Office released a report on lessons learned about the Government data breaches at the Veterans' Administration and elsewhere. That report found that Government contractor responsibilities for preventing and responding to data breaches should be clearly defined. My amendment takes a small but important step toward addressing the growing problem of lax data security by Government contractors by making sure that Americans' privacy rights are not compromised when they entrust their sensitive personal information to our Government.

I thank the lead sponsors of this bill for working with me on compromise privacy language for this bill. I also thank the many stakeholders who support this bill and my privacy amendment, including the Center for Democracy and Technology, Symantec, and the Cyber Security Industry Alliance.

I urge all Senators to support and pass this important legislation.

HONORING MARYLAND'S OLYMPIANS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I rise to honor and congratulate Maryland's Olympic athletes for their performance in the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games. These dedicated, disciplined, and accomplished athletes are a source of great pride to Maryland and the country. Therefore, it is with great enthusiasm that I commend:

Freddy Adu of Montgomery County, 2008 men's soccer team; Carmel Anthony of Baltimore, 2008 men's basketball team; David Banks of Potomac, 2008 men's Olympic rowing team; Maurice Edu of College Park, 2008 men's soccer team; Jun Gao of Montgomery County, 2008 women's table-tennis team; Georgia Gould of Baltimore, 2008 women's cycling team; Kathryn Hoff of Towson, 2008 women's Olympic swimming team; Gao Jun of Gaithersburg, 2008 men's Olympic table tennis team; Bobby Lea of Talbot County, 2008 men's Olympic cycling team; Mechelle Lewis of Prince George's County, 2008 women's track & field team; Jessica Long of Baltimore, 2008 Paralympics swimming team; Khan Bob Malaythong of Rockville, 2008 men's Olympic badminton team; Tatyana McFadden of Howard County, 2008 Paralympic wheelchair racing; Scott Parsons of Montgomery County, 2008 men's canoe and kayak team; Michael Phelps II of Baltimore, 2008 men's Olympic swimming team; Lauren Powley of the University of Maryland, 2008 women's field hockey team; Dina Rizzo of the University of Maryland, 2008 women's field

hockey team; Robbie Rogers of the University of Maryland, 2008 men's soccer team; Gary Russell of Prince George's County, 2008 men's boxing team; Jamie Schroeder of Johns Hopkins University Medical School, 2008 men's rowing team; Phil Scholz of Loyola College, 2008 Paralympic men's swimming team; Chris Seitz of the University of Maryland, 2008 men's soccer team; Keli Smith of the University of Maryland, 2008 women's field hockey team; Scott Steele of Baltimore County, 2008 men's wrestling team; Natalie Woolfolk of Arnold, Maryland, 2008 women's weightlifting team.

It is with special pride that I recognize the historical accomplishments of Baltimore's own Michael Phelps. Michael Phelps has gone where no Olympian has gone before. In this year's Olympic Games he won a record-breaking eight Gold Medals. That is a Gold Medal for every race he swam in.

Before Michael Phelps shattered the record, the most Gold Medals ever won by an individual at a single Olympics was seven. That feat was accomplished by another American swimmer, Mark Spitz. And when Spitz captured his seven Gold Medals in the 1972 Olympic Games, everyone said it couldn't be topped.

Everyone, that is, except for Michael Phelps.

The intrepid Michael Phelps didn't just break world records at this year's Olympic Games; he smashed them. He didn't simply win Gold Medals in every race he swam; he also set seven new Olympic world records along the way.

Like so many proud Marylanders and proud Americans, I watched Michael Phelps win race after race. And leave it to Michael Phelps to leave some of the best racing for last. What a race he swam August 16th. What a race; what a nailbiter. Michael Phelps, on his quest to win his seventh consecutive Gold Medal—this one in the men's 100 meter butterfly—trailing behind, and then he came roaring back from seventh place at the turn to edge Serbia's Milorad Cavic by one one-hundredth of a second. What a race. What an epic race.

I will also never forget Phelps' last race of this year's Olympic Games. It was the race that would determine whether Phelps would become the first Olympic athlete to win eight Gold Medals during a single Olympic Games. It was the race that if won would mark Phelps as the greatest swimmer and, perhaps, the greatest Olympian of all time.

I watched that historic race, as did so many Americans, with a racing heart. It was the men's 4 x 100 medley. When the race was finished—giving Phelps his eighth Gold Medal of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games—I heard a great eruption.

It was an eruption of pride and joy. It wafted out from apartments and houses that left their windows open on that warm summer night. It came from the streets below, where people spilled on sidewalks hugging and hollering. It

came from cars that tooted their horns in solemn pride. It was in the air and all around that night.

Michael Phelps, born and raised in Rodgers Forge, MD, has gone where no Olympic athlete has gone before. His performance at this year's Olympic Games has placed him in the pantheon of the greatest athletes of all time. And he has accomplished all this with great grace and humility.

Throughout his exceptional swimming career, Phelps has always been quick to praise those who have helped him along the way. He shows special reverence to his mother Debbie, who, as a single mom juggling kids and multiple jobs, taught him the values of perseverance and courage in the face of obstacles.

As a young swimmer at the North Baltimore Aquatic Club, Phelps arrived day after day and gave his maximum effort. His work ethic is a testament to his strong, value-driven Baltimore upbringing. And he is living proof that if you can dream it, you can achieve it.

I am so proud to welcome Michael Phelps back to Baltimore. He could have gone on to any city. Instead, he came back to his family and to his community. He came back to the city where he first learned the values of hard work and perseverance.

So welcome home, Michael. And welcome home to all the Olympic athletes who served Maryland—and our country—so proud at this year's Olympic Games.

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. To respect their efforts, 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:

The company I work for has just closed the doors to the center I have worked in for eight years and offered us jobs in a center over 50 miles away. Because I am three miles short of qualifying for a moving package, I (and 64 of my co-workers) will be forced to commute over 50 miles each way every day. We live in a rural area so public transportation is not an option. To get a new job would cut my wages more than half, so I must follow my job. I have three small chil-

dren (ages 2, 4 and 6), so I cannot stay away during the week and go home only on weekends.

I do not know what I will do if the cost of gas continues to rise. I, along with others that I know, could actually lose everything we have worked so hard to achieve. For the first time, I am really afraid of what is happening to my country.

Please do something now.

The rising price of gasoline is hurting nearly every family in America. We are tired of Congress doing nothing but bowing down to the environmentalists.

It is time for Congress to develop a program which allows the exploration of America's energy sources without materially affecting our environment. Congress should put our families first, ahead of the environmentalists!

YALON, Pocatello.

In response to your request on the impact of high gas prices, here is my story:

To help reduce the impact of higher fuel prices, I am taking personal responsibility of my own actions. It is actually really easy. I have made a habit of driving much less by riding a bike, walking, combining trips and cutting out unnecessary trips. The net impact has been less money spent at the pump (conservation) and I am in better health because of it.

As I ride around town, not a day goes by that I come across people letting their vehicle run idle in a parking lot while they do their errands. This includes sheriff's vehicles that idle outside the nearby office. This lack of overall awareness regarding high oil prices tells me we are not even close to changing the wasteful consumption habits Americans have adopted over many years. In the meantime, we learned nothing from the 70s. Since then, our politicians have failed to adopt a viable, self-reliant energy policy. Instead, we drive bigger vehicles and have become even more reliant on mid-east oil. The money that is being sent overseas is what allows the bad guys to fund the terrorist efforts. One in which we are fighting at the cost of over 4,000 deaths, many more permanent injuries and billions of borrowed taxpayer dollars. At this point, there is absolutely no end in sight for the war that most politicians will still not admit is all about the oil. After five years of false promises, we now have record oil prices and, what I believe is, over an eight trillion dollar deficit.

What this all has meant for me is, I woke up. I now realize how terribly screwed up things are in Washington. We are running out of oil! And the rest of the world wants the same standard of living we have! And the lack of resources and the environment cannot allow things to stay the same way, period!

In summary, your e-mail tells me you are not looking at the big picture. We cannot drill our way out of this. At best, it would only be a band-aid. I fear too many people still believe the same career politicians that are to blame for getting us into the mess we are in. They will say whatever it takes to fool voters that they have the right answers, even though history proves otherwise. What a shame.

Although I know I am fooling myself to think otherwise, I hope you have the guts to include this during your presentation to the Senate. Thanks for your time.

STEVE.

The one theme missing from so much of the concern over the rising price of energy in our country is searching/researching for alternatives! To continue to open up every potential oil source in our own country is so short-sighted since petroleum is a finite resource and does not solve the real problem.