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Hello Central Region! By now everyone should know that our 2021 ADDC Convention in New Orleans has been cancelled. This was a very difficult decision for the board to make, especially since it is the second cancellation in a row. We will be meeting next week to make arrangements for a virtual meeting to take care of the business to elect 2022 officers and vote on the amendments. Details will be sent out when arrangements have been made.

Filled up your car lately? This past weekend kicked off College Football Season. I was listening to my favorite team (Oklahoma Sooners – BOOMER SOONER) on the radio and heard a very interesting ad from OERB (Oklahoma Energy Resources Board). I went online to look for the wording of the ad. This ad, based on the article “Energy industry’s financial benefits measurable” written by Mindy Stitt, March 26, 2021, gave an interesting perspective that without our oil and gas industry, things would be even more expensive. The article states, “According to the White House Council of Economic Advisors, increased domestic oil and natural gas production, including right here in Oklahoma, saves American families an estimated $2,500 annually. A majority of that savings comes from affordable, clean and reliable natural gas, which has helped lower electricity costs by 45% since 2007. These are huge impacts for the average family, especially during colder seasons in Oklahoma when many households rely on natural gas to heat their homes.

For lower-income families who spend a larger share of their household budget on energy costs, these savings are even more significant. Energy costs for these families can be as much as 7% of their monthly budget, which is more than five times the energy cost of higher-income families. The savings is even higher for Oklahomans. In 2018, Oklahoma electricity costs averaged 7.55 cents per kilowatt-hour, compared to the national average of 10.8 cents. Thanks to the ingenuity of the hardworking men and women of the Oklahoma oil and natural gas industry, we are fortunate to have access to lower household energy costs. While we all weather the ups and downs of the past year, I’m grateful that our state is powered by such a resilient, innovative and dependable industry.”

Where would we be without this valuable natural resource? Not just to help keep our heating and electricity affordable, but the good paying jobs, the taxes collected for education, that our industry provides to American families. Our pocketbooks are hurting with the price at the pump, which in turn increases prices at the grocery stores, the lumber yards, etc.

This was just six months ago that this optimistic article was written. So much has happened since them. Shut down of the Keystone Pipeline, production restricted on federal land, dependency on foreign oil again, and now Hurricane Ida that has affected production that will take time to recover from.

But the politicians are telling us the number one problem in the world today is Climate Change. This seems to be the favorite tool to demonize our energy industry. More and more mandates are coming (all electric cars by 2035). Folks, our industry is under attack! Education is more important than ever to teach Americans the benefits of the oil and gas. It is the backbone of our economy! Yes, solar and wind energy is important, but at this point, it **does not** provide the energy to run the generators that are helping our fellow Americans survive without electricity from the destruction of Hurricane Ida.

Our motto, GREATER KNOWLEDGE, GREATER SERVICE – maybe more important now than ever!

As I write this letter, my emotions are everywhere with the economy, freedoms being eroded, COVID and now the never ending variants, the vaccination debate, the 13 soldiers we lost in Afghanistan and the turmoil that remains with the Taliban, the 9/11 anniversary coming up later this month, not to mention, the impact that all this turmoil has had on people’s mental health - stress from jobs lost, marriages dissolved, increases in suicide, family relations strained, death of loved ones, and for many of our friends and associate members, recovery from storm devastation.

Perhaps I am not the only one struggling, so, I will close with this: Do what you can, where you can, and when you can. Speak up for our American values, for our critical industry, take extra care of yourself, be kind and “be there” for others, and hold fast to His hand. That’s what I am trying to do.

Kay McKinley

2021 Central Region Director