

# I Know Who To Blame For This Economy

**WAL-MART!** I can find many ways to blame Wal-Mart for the way the economy is tanking. Time for my latest beef about the place. We went over there Friday morning because my husband didn't have to work until after lunch, and we need an oil change. So we thought we'd get the oil change done together this time, which made me really happy because normally it's just me and my two children (ages 2 and 7 mos.) who have to kill around 2 hours there every 3 months (or sometimes even more frequently). If you're thinking that spending 2 hours at Wal-Mart with 2 little kids while trying not to spend a lot of money is both exhausting and frustrating, you aren't very far off the mark. So anyway, Friday I thought I had company for the oil change, but even so, who wants to spend hours at Wal-Mart? When we pulled up, I was pleasantly surprised to see that there weren't any cars waiting, so I thought we might actually be out of there in under an hour – WRONG! The wait time they quoted us was an hour and a half! But we needed the oil change and were kind of trying to kill time until the area restaurants would start serving lunch, so we decided to go for it, especially since they've opened an H & R Block in the Wal-Mart for tax season. Taxes and an oil change – kill two birds with one stone, or so we thought... We get to the other side of the store where the makeshift H & R Block is, and we find out it's not open until 1pm. So we went back to the Automotive Department to sign in our car anyway, and that's when we discover that an oil change at Wal-Mart is now \$30! That is a \$7.50 increase in price over the last 3 months! So no taxes to get done + expensive oil change + long wait = forget it! And I will add the fact that Wal-Mart sucks at oil changes. Almost every time I'd come home with the car, it would act funny or something else would be wrong with it. Once they forgot to put the air filter back in, several times they

didn't replace the wiper fluid when it was checked off on the to-do list, and a few times I had to go back and have them re-vacuum the interior of the car because they said they did it but clearly had not. Those were the days when oil changes were still so reasonable in price that we got the full monty of services, including the vacuuming and the refilling of fluids – not anymore!

We called other places around town, and we found that Wal-Mart is now the most expensive AND takes the longest. But at the other places you needed an appointment, so we'll have to wait until next week – no problem if I don't have to go back to Wal-Mart! Plus I'd rather support the little guy anyway (ever hear the country music song "Little Man" by Alan Jackson? It's a good one and I highly recommend listening to it if you're frustrated about Wal-Mart's world take-over). And that brings me to why I'm blaming Wal-Mart for the awful economy...

They're putting all the little guys out of business, so there go the jobs and the competition in the retail world that was keeping product and services prices reasonable. Wal-Mart sets the pricing trends, unfortunately. Mark my words, as soon as the little guys in town get wind that Wal-Mart upped their oil change prices, they will follow suit and you won't be able to touch an oil change for under \$30. And worse yet, I read in the newspaper just yesterday that Wal-Mart is the only retail place that posted profits for January. In fact, they're doing even better than Wall Street predicted for them, which in this economy, makes them stand alone in that respect.

The state of our economy is so bad right now that I suppose it's not logical to blame just one entity. But moaning about Walmart is a good venting tool, and they p\*ss me off!

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# Keeping things random

I've written about many things. Family, friends, food, pets, acting, theater, movies, books, blogs, computers and other things I can't remember. Today I think I will write about something else, Politics.

Most of the time, I will avoid the topics of religion and politics on this blog and in real life. I've seen more friends almost come to blows when discussing these topics, so I generally keep them out of my daily conversation. Recent events just beg for some discussion.

I'm very concerned about the number of Obama nominees have trouble paying taxes. Not to just pick on them, this started me wondering how many Federal politicians have the same problem. The nominees didn't pay their back taxes and penalties (if any) until after they were nominated. If they knew about the tax problem, they should have paid as soon as they knew, or at least filed paperwork to get this taken care of. From everything I've read, this has not been the case. And the politicians doing the approving didn't think this wasn't enough to keep them from serving in their appointments. Heck, one has already been approved.

It seems to me, if these amounts had been owed by a 'normal' citizen, that citizen would have been on trial at least, and maybe even thrown in jail. And the politicians in Washington don't think this is anything big. Could it be that they also have something to hide? What would we find out if their taxes and backgrounds were scrutinized? This is a very troubling condition in Washington. They are the ones that pass all the tax laws, shouldn't they be the most careful in filing their taxes.

I guess this is one more reason to try to get a flat tax or even a national sales tax to replace the income tax. Make it

real easy to pay your taxes, and even easier to find out if you didn't pay the taxes you owe. That is probably the reason we don't have an easy tax system, it would make it harder for all those politicians to hide there missing payments.

Grrrr... Can you tell I'm filling out my tax forms... ☹