

Congressman

Paul Tsongas Reports

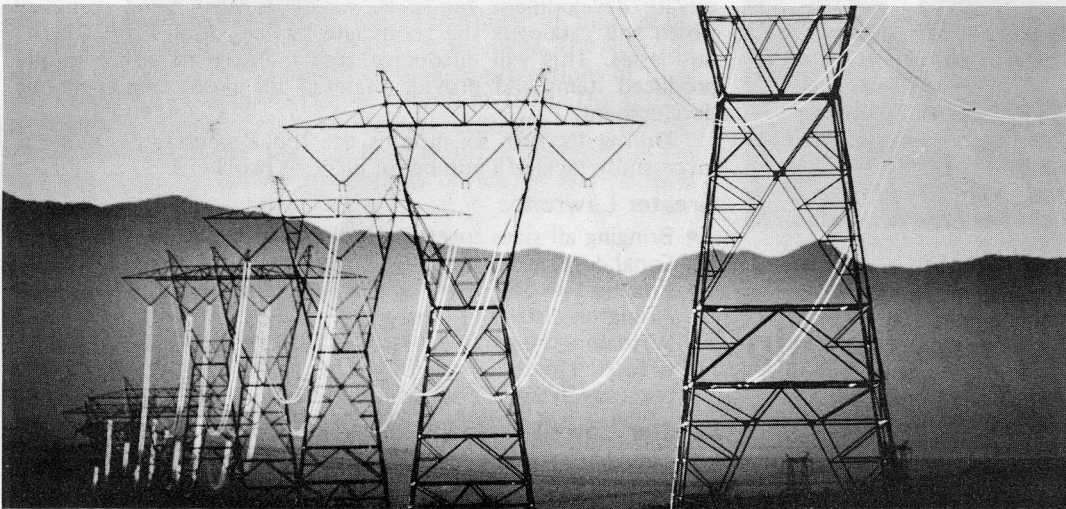
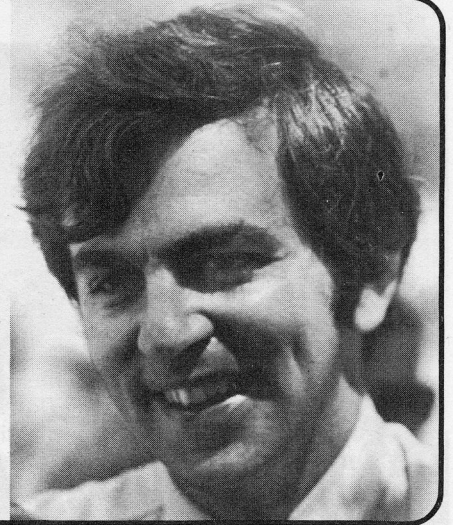


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House Passes Energy Bill

A summer of wrangling over energy by the President and Congress has left the nation without any effective energy policy, in the view of Congressman Paul Tsongas. Tsongas, who was in the thick of the fight as a member of the Interior Committee's Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment, said that "the President's policies are disastrous, while those of Congress are ineffective. The result is that we're living with a dormant energy crisis that could erupt again at any time."

Tsongas expressed his concern after Congress had passed an energy bill which includes import quotas and a tax on auto manufacturers, but turned down an amendment which would have taxed purchasers of large gas-guzzling cars. During the week of energy action the Tsongas solar energy amendment passed the House while his Fuel Efficiency in Government amendment was rejected for technical reasons.

Pressure from the auto manufacturers helped defeat the so-called "gas-guzzler tax". The proposal, which Tsongas supported, would have taxed purchasers of cars which did not meet minimum mileage standards. The tax was similar to one which had been used successfully for many years in gas-poor France. The tax that finally passed, on the other hand, applies to a manufacturer's entire fleet of cars. It will therefore be levied not only on the buyers of large gas-guzzling cars but on energy-conscious consumers as well. The

compact car buyer, in effect, helps pay the tax for the owner of the limousine. Manufacturers favored this form of tax because it would not inhibit the sale of the larger cars on which they make greater profits. Tsongas called the tax that finally passed "unfair to those consumers who are really trying to conserve energy".

Tsongas offered an amendment to the Energy Bill known as the Fuel Efficiency in Government Amendment. It would have required government-purchased cars to meet minimum energy-saving mileage standards. The Tsongas amendment would have saved the government about \$30 million and 54 million gallons of gas annually. It was rejected for technical reasons but Tsongas will reintroduce the measure in the Senate with the co-sponsorship of Senator Kennedy.

A second Tsongas amendment — this one to the Energy Resources Development Act — would authorize increased funds for solar energy research. It passed the House and there is a good chance that the funds will be appropriated by the Senate.

In related energy action, the Energy and Environment Subcommittee investigated the benefits and risks of nuclear power, including the liquid metal fast-breeder reactor being developed by the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA), at hearings co-chaired by Tsongas. ERDA officials defended the

program saying the breeder reactor would produce plutonium fuel as a by-product and would relieve the U.S. of dependence on very limited supplies of uranium. Others argued that solar energy should be given priority over nuclear energy, and condemned the breeder reactor program as expensive and potentially hazardous. Tsongas urged caution in funding the project, on the grounds that there are important safety questions still unanswered and because the project design is already eight years old and may be outmoded.

Senior Citizen Intern Program

A unique Intern Program designed to directly involve Senior Citizens in the operations of the Fifth District Congressional Office has been initiated and will begin in September.

The Program invites interested citizens to spend a few hours each week working in the Lowell, Lawrence or Lexington Offices. Volunteers will be involved in constituent casework; special projects such as monitoring elderly legislation and work with governmental and private agencies providing services to the elderly.

All Senior Citizens are encouraged to become involved in the Program. If you are interested, please call or write any of the District Offices.

Three offices serve district

Three Congressional offices are now serving residents of the fifth Congressional District. The offices and their hours are:

- Lowell: 50 Kearney Square, Room 216

459-0101

Open 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. weekdays, and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on alternate Saturdays

- Lawrence: 469 Essex Street 683-5313

Open 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. weekdays, and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on alternate Saturdays

- Lexington: 185 Bedford Street

862-1847

Open 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

Office staff are available to assist you with questions and problems relating to Federal government services, including veterans' affairs, Social Security benefits, food stamps, medicare, and consumer matters. Congressman Tsongas also schedules office hours on weekends when he is in the district and during Congressional recesses. You can call any of the offices to set up an appointment.

Grain Deal Threatens Food Prices

"It's beginning to appear that the single biggest cause of inflation in the country is Earl Butz," Paul Tsongas said in reaction to the Agriculture Secretary's approval of the sale of 10 million tons of American grain to Russia. It is generally agreed that the sale, like the infamous 1972 Russian Wheat Deal, will drive up supermarket prices while generating windfall profits for a small number of giant grain dealers.

"It's time that President Ford removed Earl Butz", Tsongas said, "and appointed someone who is more concerned about the interests of the American people. As the result of Mr. Butz's policies, this country has virtually no control over the sale of its most precious natural resource: food."

(Continued on Page 3)



Tsongas chairs freshman meeting with House Leadership

Congressman Paul Tsongas was the leader of a group of freshman Congressmen that formed early this summer to discuss means of strengthening House leadership after the President had vetoed three major pieces of legislation. On June 17 a group of 35 freshmen met with Speaker of the House Carl Albert and majority leader Thomas P. O'Neill. The freshmen chose Tsongas to chair the meeting and to act as spokesman for the group. The freshmen and the leadership reached a general agreement on a program of leadership reform proposed by the freshmen, including a five-day work week and strengthening of the Whip system.

According to Tsongas, "Our aim is to develop a structure and a leadership that will be able to pass comprehensive legislation in areas such as health and energy and, when necessary, override Presidential vetoes of programs that are in the public interest."

Telling it to your Congressman

One of the most successful means of communication in U.S. Rep. Paul Tsongas' first six months in office has been the "Tell It To Your Congressman" sessions that are being held in area communities. The informal meetings allow constituents to question Tsongas on all types of issues. There are no speeches and no special ground rules.

"We decided to hold these meetings in all of the communities of the Fifth District so that I can personally assess opinions on important issues and on my performance in Congress," Paul Tsongas says. "After conducting fourteen of these open meetings, it's obvious that people prefer a frank face-to-face discussion to the standard political fare."

"Open meetings" have also served as a conduit for new ideas. Besides helping Tsongas make final decisions on a number of important issues, the impetus behind two energy related efforts came out of open meetings. The first, an attempt to mandate fuel efficient government automobiles, will be introduced in the Senate next month. And second, an effort to direct additional funds towards solar energy research was encouraged by strong support of those attending recent community sessions.

Late August and early September will see five additional "Tell It To Your Congressman" meetings. Tsongas is urging all residents of the communities, "whether you agree or disagree with me" to attend their local session. The next meetings include:

Townsend, Mon. Aug. 25	
Lower Town Hall	7:30 pm
Pepperell, Tues. Aug. 26	
Town Hall	7:30 pm
Tyngsboro, Thurs. Aug. 28	
Jr.-Sr. High School	
Auditorium, Norris Rd.	7:30 pm
Lowell, Mon. Sept. 15	
First United Baptist	
Church, 99 Church St.	
(Zayre's/Stop & Shop plaza)	7:30 pm
Lawrence, Tues. Sept. 16	
Public Library Auditorium	
51 Lawrence St.	7:30 pm

Job Resources Section Assists Local Economy

The "Job Resources Section" (JRS) of the Congressional office was formed to assist Fifth District economic development. Providing help for members of the business community and municipalities in dealing with the federal government, Job Resources Assistants are based in Lowell, Lawrence, and Washington.

In order to assess economic conditions and determine how best to be of assistance, the JRS recently held a series of meetings throughout the district. 54 meetings were conducted with individuals representing about 120 businesses, industries, municipalities, unions, banks, agencies and organizations. Along with assembling lists of specific needs, the meetings resulted in a decision to provide a number of additional services. They include a municipal, business, and small business newsletter offering information about government contracts and regulations; regular seminars with federal officials; and the possibility of establishing private development funds. A survey is now being compiled which will catalogue the goods and services of all Fifth District businesses. This will encourage area industry to utilize locally produced items and provide material for promoting economic development.

During its first six months the Job Resources Section has successfully tackled a number of difficult problems:

Greater Lawrence

- Bringing all sides together to discuss a compromise on North Canal development plans in Lawrence.
- Freeing \$65,000 in HUD loan funds for rehabilitation in the Arlington district of Lawrence.
- Persuading North Andover officials not to halt work on the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District waste-water treatment plant involving 442 construction jobs.

Greater Lowell

- Assisting developers in Lowell in securing a \$3.2 million Massachusetts Housing Finance Authority loan to construct a Central and Market St. office building and elderly residence.
- Mediation of a dispute between Ideal Tape and State officials in an attempt to keep the Lowell company from moving to New Hampshire.
- Arranging for the Town of Westford to receive \$41,500 as final federal payment for the new Police-Fire Station. The funds had been delayed pending an audit review.
- Working with local, state and federal officials to expedite work on the delayed Duck Island water treatment plant.

Washington

- Guiding a \$94,000 appropriation through Committee that will fund the Lowell Urban Park Commission. The Ford Administration had refused to allocate any money for this key study.
- Saving a \$400,000 experimental desalinization program being conducted by Avco in Wilmington by securing funds through the Office of Water Research and Technology.
- Co-sponsoring a business intern program with the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce which will report to the new Energy Research and Development Administration.

Of course, neither the activities of the Job Resources Section nor an individual Congressman can assure economic prosperity. "At a time when Massachusetts is suffering from record unemployment and the nation is slowly emerging from a deep recession, our area is going to be naturally prone to difficult economic conditions," Tsongas says. "We've been attempting to restore some confidence in our older cities and in the towns around the Route 128 area. Our area has great advantages and important resources. This is what we have to promote."



Paul Tsongas fields questions at open meeting in Methuen.

Grain Deal (Continued)

Even Agriculture Department officials admit that the new wheat deal will cause a slight rise in the price of bread and cereal, and will have a more serious effect on the prices of meat, poultry and dairy products. Most of the grain raised in this country is fed to animals, and higher grain prices mean higher food costs for consumers. Current meat prices still reflect the effects of the last Russian grain deal, and U.S. storage bins have never been refilled since the 1972 purchase.

Congressman Tsongas announced that he is co-sponsoring legislation which would authorize the Commodity Credit Corporation of the Department of Agriculture to act as sole bargaining agent for foreign agriculture transactions. According to Tsongas, "grain trading is an important part of our relations with other nations and it is economically beneficial for this country. However, we can't leave our markets at the mercy of a monolithic buyer which is capable of wrecking our agricultural economy with a single deal. This legislation would give us the leverage necessary to deal with the Soviets."

Under current Agriculture Department policy, American grain dealers voluntarily inform the Department of their deals, but there is no control over the deals that are made. The Russians, for their part, supposedly agreed to provide projections of their grain needs at the Nixon-Brezhnev summit in 1973. The system has failed to protect American Markets, according to Tsongas, because the agreements have not been enforced and because the Department of Agriculture predictions of supply and demand have been wildly inaccurate.

Good News for Hanscom

Cambridge Research Laboratories (CRL) will remain at Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford. The good news came on July 31 when Secretary of the Air Force John L. McLucas met with Congressman Tsongas and Senators Kennedy and Brooke to discuss the status of a requested Hanscom review.

If the CRL relocation plans had not been reversed, more than 500 jobs and millions of dollars in area contracts would have been transferred out of Hanscom.

Civilian employees at CRL had worked closely with Tsongas and the Senators to protest the planned relocation to New Mexico. They prepared an early study and testified at hearings pointing out the detrimental effects of the proposed move.

"This decision is extremely important to the economy of the Fifth District and of Greater Boston," Tsongas stated. "The significance is not only that CRL and the Electronic Systems Division will remain part of Hanscom, but that the Air Force will become increasingly dependent upon these facilities in the future."

Legislative Highlights

The 94th Congress has been the most active in years. A number of bills designed by the Democratic majority have been passed in an effort to come to grips with the economic and energy problems faced by the nation. President Ford, pursuing a policy of confrontation with the Congress, has vetoed several of these legislative initiatives. Highlights include:

- The Tax Reduction Act — On March 26th, the House passed the Tax Reduction Act which provided for \$8.1 billion in rebates, cut 1975 individual income taxes by \$10 billion and provided for a tax credit to purchasers of new houses. The bill also contained a \$50 bonus payment to Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and railroad retirement recipients. Congressman Tsongas voted in favor of the bill.
- Oil Depletion Allowance — On February 27th the House voted to repeal the Oil Depletion Allowance, a 22% special tax break favoring oil companies. Congressman Tsongas voted in favor of repeal.
- Emergency Employment Act — On March 12th, the House passed the Emergency Employment Act which would have made available nearly \$6 billion to create new jobs in federal agencies. The bill was aimed particularly at creating jobs in the depressed construction industry. President Ford vetoed the bill. On June 4th, an override attempt failed by 5 votes. Congressman Tsongas voted in favor of the bill's passage and in favor of overriding the President's veto.
- Emergency Housing Act — On June 5th, the House passed a bill providing temporary mortgage subsidies for purchasing homes and federal loans to unemployed homeowners unable to meet mortgage payments. The President vetoed the bill and, after failing to override, Congress passed a compromise bill by voice vote. This bill was signed into law. Congressman Tsongas strongly supported the original bill in committee and voted for final passage and to override the veto.
- Energy Bill — Congressman Tsongas introduced an amendment to the Energy Conservation and Conversion Act which would have provided a minimum fuel mileage standard for vehicles purchased by the government. The amendment would have saved millions of gallons of fuel, but was over-ruled on the House floor. Tsongas plans to reintroduce the legislation as a separate bill.
- Lifting of Turkish Arms Embargo — The House rejected a bill to remove the embargo against the shipment of U.S. arms to Turkey. The legislation was defeated by a 206-223 vote. Congressman Tsongas opposed the bill.

Questionnaire

Questionnaires like this are one of the best means a Congressman has to learn how people feel about a wide variety of issues that Congress faces. Please take a few minutes to fill out

the form. There's room for 2 sets of answers for each household. When you've finished, refold the newsletter so the return mailer is on the outside, staple or tape the bottom edge, and drop it in the mail with an 8¢ stamp. The results of this poll will be released to the press when it has been tabulated, and you'll find a complete breakdown of the results in the next issue of the newsletter.

	Respondent 1		Respondent 2			Respondent 1		Respondent 2						
	Yes	No	Yes	No		Yes	No	Yes	No					
HEALTH EDUCATION AND WELFARE														
1. Should Congress enact a program of comprehensive national health insurance for all Americans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	INTERNATIONAL									
2. Do you feel that Social Security benefits adequately cover the cost of living?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Should Congress restrict CIA activities which interfere with the internal affairs of foreign countries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3. Should the government sponsor a public works program to create jobs for the unemployed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Should the United States renew diplomatic and trade relations with Cuba?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
CRIME														
4. Do you favor legislation (check one)					CONSUMER ISSUES									
a. banning the sale or possession of handguns?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		10. Which of the following areas is most in need of government regulation to protect consumers? (check one)									
b. banning the sale or possession of all firearms?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		a. Automobile repair		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
c. requiring the registration of firearms?	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		b. Household appliance repair		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
d. None of the above — the sale and possession of firearms should not be restricted.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		c. Radio and television repair		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
ENERGY														
5. Which form of energy should the government give the highest priority to developing? (check one)					d. other		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
a. nuclear energy	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		e. none		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
b. solar energy	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		ECONOMY									
c. oil and coal resources including searching for additional reserves	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		11. Should Congress pass legislation which would effectively reduce corporate taxes and encourage capital formation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
6. How should oil and gas reserves on public lands be developed?					DEFENSE (check one)									
a. Development should be left to private oil companies.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		12. Do you feel that defense spending is									
b. A federal oil and gas company should be created to develop these resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		a. Too great.		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
7. Do you favor strict environmental controls on strip mining?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Too Little.		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
					c. About right.		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					
					MISCELLANEOUS									
					13. Should Congress pass legislation permitting voter registration by postcard? ...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
					14. Do you favor public financing of Congressional election campaigns?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
					15. What issues do you think Congress should be paying most attention to?									
					a.									
					b.									
					c.									

Paul E. Tsongas
M.C.

POSTAL PATRON – LOCAL
FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
MASSACHUSETTS



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Dear Constituent:

It's been my privilege to serve you in Congress now for seven months. This newsletter is my report back to you on some of the major issues Congress has faced during that time, and on activities my office has undertaken to serve you in the district.

In addition to communicating through this newsletter, I've held a series of open meetings around the district to meet as many of you as possible and discuss issues face to face. And, of course, my district offices are there to serve you; don't hesitate to call or drop in, or you can contact me directly by writing to my office in Washington, as thousands of you have already done.

Finally, I've tried to make this newsletter a two-way street for communication by including a questionnaire. By filling it out and letting me know how you feel about these important questions you can help me be a better representative.

Sincerely,

Paul E. Tsongas
Paul E. Tsongas
Member of Congress

PLACE
STAMP
HERE