

10/28/75

CONGRESSMAN TSONGAS REPORTS

RESULTS OF FIFTH DISTRICT OPINION SURVEY

Constituents responding to a Fifth District questionnaire contained in our first newsletter overwhelmingly agree that Congress should be most concerned with economic and energy issues. When asked to list issues which "Congress should be paying most attention to", respondents most often mentioned the economy and energy.

A clear majority of respondents (61%) favor the registration or banning of handguns, believe CIA activities should be restricted (62%-37%), are divided on public financing of Congressional campaigns (51%-48%) and oppose voter registration by postcard (21%-78%). 7348 persons responded to the district-wide opinion survey.

By including the questionnaire in the newsletter, I hoped to be able to ascertain your views on our national priorities. Since I have devoted a good deal of my time in the Congress to economic and energy related issues, I was pleased to see that the survey results indicate that these are also your major concerns. When constituents were asked to list issues which require Congressional action (three blank spaces were provided), the following issues were mentioned by the corresponding percentage of participants:

Economy related . . .61%	Environment 9
Energy42	Reduce defense spending . . 9
Tax reform14	Mass Transportation 7
Social services . . .13	International issues. . . . 6
Reduce spending . . .13	Welfare reform. 6
Less government	National health insurance . 5
regulation.11	Busing. 3
Congressional reform 9	

In specific energy areas, most district residents feel that solar energy ought to play a large part in helping to meet future needs. When asked "which form of energy should the government give the highest priority to developing?", 50% chose solar energy. Oil and coal exploration was named by 28%, while nuclear development was chosen by 20%. While studies show that all types of alternative energy sources must be developed, solar energy appears to be an inexhaustible, clean, and potentially, a reasonably priced energy option. I have been working hard to see that New England submits a top-notch proposal for the \$50 million federal Solar Energy Research Institute. The response to this effort from individuals, business representatives, and public officials has been very encouraging. The quality of volunteered work and depth of commitment

leads me to believe that New England is finally uniting to solve the serious energy problems that exist. Two additional energy-related questions were asked:

"How should oil and gas reserves on public lands be developed?"

- Private oil companies 40%
- Creation of a federal company 55%

"Do you favor strict environmental controls on strip mining?"

- Yes 70%
- No 24%

Come other results indicate that respondents are in favor of national health insurance (62%-37%), public works employment programs (57%-39%), and re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba (72%-23%). Those participating were opposed to reducing corporate taxes to stimulate investment (42%-48%). The overwhelming number of respondents believe that present Social Security payments were not adequate (adequate-18%, inadequate-78%).

Questions were also asked about the need for consumer legislation and on the level of defense spending:

"Which of the following areas is most in need of government regulation to protect consumers?"

- automobile repair.44%
- household appliance repair . 5
- radio and television repair. 6
- other.15
- not necessary.25

"Defense spending is":

- too great.51%
- too little18
- about right.31

I want to thank those who took the time to fill out and mail back your questionnaires. The views expressed help me to better represent you. I also want to assure those who did not have the opportunity to participate that another questionnaire will be included in a newsletter early next year.