

Senator Tsongas I wonder if the Senator from Washington and the Senator from Kentucky would take a moment to clarify a point. The Senator from New Jersey and I are hopeful that our community energy conservation legislation, which is part of S.1280, the Energy Management Partnership Act, can be enacted in this session of Congress. We are now on the verge of providing the missing link in our national energy strategy, by making government our partner in efforts to deal with the energy crisis. The Senator from Washington is a co-sponsor of that legislation, and he has been tremendously helpful to us along the long road to establishing this new program. I wonder if he or the Senator from Kentucky would clarify for us the situation with respect to funding for the Energy Management Partnership Act for FY 81.

Senator Huddleston I would be pleased to explain the Committee's understanding of the situation for the Senator from Massachusetts and the Senator from New Jersey. The Administration, as the Senators know, requested a budget item of \$25 million for the local energy conservation program, on the assumption that we will authorize such a program in this Congress. The Committee believes that the effort to involve local governments in the development and implementation of our national energy policy is highly desirable. The Committee's decision to defer action on funding for this important program was based on the fact that the authorization process is not yet completed. It is my understanding that we are waiting for the full House to act on local energy conservation legislation, and that we will require a conference on this legislation. So, the Committee provided no funds for the community energy conservation program in this appropriation bill. ①

Senator Tsongas I appreciate the Senator from Kentucky's explanation for what I feel was a significant omission in the Committee's deliberations this year. I had understood that there would be report language clarifying the situation, but since there is no report language, I am happy to have the Senator's explanation. I know that the Senator from New Jersey also has some specific points to raise with respect to this funding, but I would simply like to ask the Senator from Kentucky if he would further clarify what the Committee would expect to do once the authorization legislation is enacted. ②

Senator Huddleston I would be glad to indicate for the Senator what the Committee's expectation is. It is the Committee's understanding that the Administration will seek a supplemental funding request for local government energy conservation and renewable resource programs. As the Senator knows, the Administration has expressed their strong support for a local conservation program, and has indicated that they will seek funding once the legislation is enacted. When the supplemental appropriation request is transmitted by the Administration, I want to assure the Senator that the Committee will consider it expeditiously. ③

Senator Williams I appreciate receiving this assurance from the Senator from Kentucky. I would like to point out that this legislation received the unanimous endorsement of the Senate last July 25, and we are indeed anxious to get this program up and running in our cities as soon as possible. I know that the Senator from Washington is well aware, as I am, that the recession has hit our nation's cities perhaps harder than any place else. The local energy conservation program has direct bearing on our efforts to offset or alleviate the special burdens of recession in our urban areas. The program can help put our cities back on a strong economic footing. It is a money saver and a jobs producer. The sooner we can get this supplemental funding approved, the sooner we will get the funds out where they are so badly needed.

Senator Magnuson I do agree with the Senator from New Jersey that from both a budgetary and energy point of view we cannot afford to delay much longer this important new initiative. In addition, let me give the strongest assurance to the Senator from Massachusetts and the Senator from New Jersey that as Chairman of the Committee and co-sponsor of the legislation, it is my intention to work quickly for the supplemental following enactment of the bill. (A)

Senator Williams Again, I thank the Chairman, and would like to say that the Senator from Massachusetts and I were strongly hopeful that this appropriation bill would contain funding for this important program, but I think we can now feel that we have assurances that the Committee will act with all due speed to approve a supplemental once the authorizing legislation is enacted.