

Dear Colleague:

We are introducing legislation to enact a comprehensive energy conservation and renewable resource policy at all levels of government. We are especially concerned that units of local government, those with the greatest ability to assist and act quickly to reduce the waste of energy and to assure more efficient use of our resources, be made a part of our national energy policy. Without an effective response this nation will remain susceptible to OPEC-induced inflation and vulnerable to disruptions in the Middle East.

The lack of a comprehensive energy policy at the local level impacts not only upon national strategic and economic concerns, but upon every family. Energy costs are becoming the largest single item in local government budgets and family budgets. People who can no longer afford the gas to get to work, and people who can no longer meet their fuel and utility bills are the first victims.

~~The Administration has proposed budgeting \$151 million for FY 1981 for the Energy Management Partnership Act. Our bill authorizes a total of \$162 million for FY'81. For the first time, it would set up a comprehensive energy conservation and renewable resource program involving all levels of government. The legislation would assist communities in community energy planning and development through an amendment to the existing community development block grant program. Second, it would provide competitive grants to local governments for capital intensive energy projects -- such as district heating, small-hydro, and co-generation. Third, the Act would consolidate existing state energy programs, strengthening the role of states in achieving national energy goals.~~

Finally, the bill would authorize the establishment of a National Community Energy Reference Center for the purpose of providing information and technical assistance to state and local governments to ensure the coordination and efficiency of this policy.

Alternative energy resources will not be sufficiently available in this decade. In the meantime, a most effective means of reducing reliance on foreign oil imports will be through a concerted effort on the part of States and local governments to reduce our consumption of scarce fossil fuels.

The City of Portland, Oregon, has shown that by changing its building codes, its zoning codes, its transportation corridors, and its development patterns, it will be able to make a wise investment now that will reap a 30% energy use reduction by 1990. A wise policy now will avoid unbearable costs and waste later, but Portland and other cities across the nation cannot afford to commit sufficient funds of their own to put these plans into effect.

We have attached a summary of the provisions of this legislation which we intend to introduce on Thursday, April 10th. We would be pleased to have you join us as an original co-sponsor, and would be pleased to respond to any questions you might have. Please call Frank at x4-9210, or Missy or Mitch at x4-2742.

Sincerely,

PAUL E. TSONGAS
United States Senator

national energy goals.

Finally, the bill would authorize