

## TSONGAS AMENDMENT RESTORES ENERGY CONSERVATION CUTS

Massachusetts will receive an additional one-half million dollars in energy conservation funds due to the efforts of Senator Paul Tsongas. The Baystate legislator was successful in restoring \$27.2 million to the Interior Appropriations Bill which is expected to pass the Senate later today. Tsongas also received a commitment from the Chairman of the Energy Committee to work toward an even higher funding level during the House-Senate Conference.

The Tsongas amendment would allow existing energy conservation programs in Massachusetts and nationwide to continue at minimal funding levels. Without the additional money, these programs would be 41% below last years levels.

The three major energy conservation programs in Massachusetts benefiting from the restoration of funds are:

Schools and Hospitals - \$310,500  
State Energy Conservation Programs - \$94,500  
Energy Extension Services - \$106,000

According to the State Energy Resources Office, many conservation programs in the state would suffer from further cuts. Examples of successful programs under the Schools and Hospitals Program (431 have been awarded ) are:

- The Berkshire Community College where a \$29,000 grant for conservation improvements will result in a savings of \$10,000 per year.
- The Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical High School where a \$111,000 grant resulted in a \$100,000 savings annually.
- The Barnstable County Hospital where a \$28,000 grant resulted in a 2 year payback in energy conservation savings.

Under the Energy Extension Service:

- The Center for Ecological Technology in Pittsfield operated a Small Business Energy Assistance Program in which \$20,000 worth of technical assistance was provided to fifteen small businesses with a first year energy savings of \$11,241 and
- The New England Innovative Group was awarded \$15,000 to operate municipal financing assistance workshops and provide technical assistance to interested qualified municipalities. The total dollar savings achieved by the 5 municipalities selected was approximately \$397,000 in 1982 Oil dollars.

The Tsongas amendment received the endorsement of the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office of Energy Resources as well as twenty-two national organizations and coalitions including the National Governor's Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, The League of Women Voters, The Energy Conservation Coalition, etc.

"Energy is still an important national priority" Tsongas stated. When the energy crisis is revisited upon this country in the years ahead, it will have been important that we held the line and saved these critical programs.