

NEWS

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STATEMENT ON CARTER ENERGY PROPOSALS REP. PAUL E. TSONGAS April 21, 1977

"The President's energy package appears to be tough, fair, and above all, necessary.

Jimmy Carter is doing exactly what a President must do -- provide leadership.

As a member of the new ad hoc energy committee I intend to work for passage of the most equitable and comprehensive energy plan possible.

The President has exhibited a great deal of courage in facing up to the energy crisis. The question now is whether the Congress will have the courage to do what is necessary to guarantee the future of this country. The American people also will be tested. We must be willing to face this crisis squarely. Sacrifices now will avoid economic and energy disaster later.

The future direction is clear. We must have smaller and more efficient cars. We must do a far better job at energy conservation. We must accelerate coal development. Renewable resource development must be expedited. The day of cheap, abundant energy is past.

The most controversial aspect of the package is bound to be the proposed gasoline tax. The President did not specify a trigger mechanism for the tax. This aspect will have to be closely examined. In addition, the revenue raised by such a tax must be fairly rebated to individuals. I would expect that the President will be in for a tough fight on this part of the plan.

I am pleased at the prospect for the New England economy. The suggested pricing system will balance energy costs across the country. This will assist manufacturing and other industries in our region. Just as importantly, the emphasis on conservation and solar energy will be a boon to high technology firms who have been seeking new capital and markets.

I would anticipate a good deal of disagreement about some parts of the Carter plan. However, the Congress must realize that it is now responsible for passing the laws that will provide the nation with a coherent energy policy. Failure to meet this responsibility will leave our country in a disastrous economic and energy position."