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CONGRESSMAN TSONGAS REPORTS

"ENERGY, ERDA, AND THE FIFTH DISTRICT"

This week, several hundred copies of our 247-page report, "Energy, ERDA, and the Fifth District", will begin going out to energy related companies in the Fifth Congressional District.

"ERDA" stands for the Energy Research and Development Administration and is a new \$5 billion agency created to help solve America's energy problems. But despite the awarding of millions of dollars to private companies and universities over the past year, few Fifth District or Massachusetts concerns have been able to share in this work.

As textiles were the backbone of Lowell and Lawrence at the turn of the century, the electronics industry is now the key to the Merrimack Valley and the Route 128 economy. The technological expertise of these firms, laboratories, and their employees is invaluable to our area and to the entire country. The Fifth District's high unemployment rate is an ominous reflection of serious regional problems. A reduction in government defense contracts combined with Administration decisions weighted against our area's interests has hurt the electronics industry and resulted in many lay-offs. Given the capabilities of these firms and the massive investment in energy, the Fifth District and Massachusetts ought to be leading the field in energy research and development. To help make this concept a reality, a number of questions have to be answered. This is what we set about to do.

The Greater Lowell and Greater Lawrence Chambers of Commerce, in cooperation with my office, decided to publish a manual for doing business with ERDA. The result was a professional intern program, months of interviews and research, and this week... "Energy, ERDA, and the Fifth District." Much of the work was done by Joseph LeVangie and Dr. Harold Rosenbaum of Lexington in cooperation with my staff.

The book explains how ERDA is organized, how energy policy is formulated by the Administration and the Congress, discusses what type of products and research will be necessary, and most importantly, provides a means of access. Addresses, telephone numbers, and appropriate officials are listed. Necessary information for both small and large businesses is included. In fact, we have been told that this publication is the only source available that provides this information as well as a regional and national assessment of the energy crisis, an explanation of energy terminology, and a bibliography of relevant energy publications.

We are quite proud of this publication. An indication of its uniqueness has been the response by firms outside of the Fifth District and multiple requests from ERDA for copies of the report. In addition, the link established between ERDA and my office has provided valuable insight which I hope will assist in improving the relationship between this important new federal agency and New England. Already, it has prompted us to initiate the effort to locate the Solar Energy Research Institute in our region. Early this year, a technical energy workshop will be held and will include ERDA officials.

As earlier stated, "Energy, ERDA, and the Fifth District," is now being distributed. Energy-related concerns that do not receive a copy of the report by mid-February should contact my office. Additional copies and copies for firms outside the Fifth District may be purchased through the Greater Lowell or Lawrence Chambers of Commerce.