

CONGRESSMAN LES AuCOIN
COMMENTS ON ENERGY

National Energy Plan

Our national energy plan must emphasize the development of existing energy resources, stretching these resources with a strong conservation program, especially on the part of the individual consumer.

Additionally, it must concentrate our financial resources on the development of safe, alternative energy technologies: coal, solar power, geothermal reserves. We must take every reasonable step to lessen our dependence on foreign oil.

When we are faced with energy shortages, the burden must be distributed fairly among all consumers, with sensitivity to regional differences and basic priority industries such as agriculture. State developed plans to do this should, whenever possible, be given precedence over federally mandated programs.

Gasoline Rationing Program

I opposed the recently defeated gasoline rationing program because it would have been an expensive, bureaucratic nightmare. More important, however, it would have been very unfair in distributing the burdens of the gasoline shortage.

Oregon would have received less than the national average in fuel allocation. The needs of agriculture were not adequately protected. It favored those families affluent enough to own three cars and put less affluent families with a single car at the mercy of a "white market," a euphemism for legalized scalping. There was no assurance the plan would be used only in an emergency, and not as a substitute for programs to produce new sources of energy.

If we must have rationing, it must be a program that can be administered easily and is fair.