

LES AUCOIN
1ST DISTRICT, OREGON



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

URGENT! URGENT! URGENT!

November 17, 1980

Dear Colleague:

Today the House will consider on the suspension calendar S. 885, the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act. When the vote comes at the end of the day, I urge you to vote against this bill. Let me explain why.

First, this legislation sets up a funding mechanism in the Northwest that will underwrite the construction of large capital intensive generating plants. Proponents of the bill say that it encourages no particular form of power generation, but my reading of the bill leads me to a different conclusion. My reading of the bill suggests that the bill's "guaranteed purchase authority" is a clear invitation for easy financing for large, capital intensive plants -- nuclear plants in particular. These plants will be built at the expense of less costly energy resources, especially conservation, inflicting rates on the people of the region that are far greater than need be.

Second, by making nuclear plants financially attractive to build, this bill asks the people of our region to accept new nuclear plants without addressing the problem of radioactive waste these plants will generate. This is unacceptable. Nuclear waste safety must come before nuclear plant construction. Last Friday I offered an amendment to address the question of nuclear waste disposal. It would have required that a Federally licensed disposal system be in place before the Bonneville Power Administrator could acquire the power from a new nuclear generating facility. Proponents of the bill who seek to build these plants in the region had the amendment ruled out of order on a technicality. But the waste problem remains and the people of the region and my Congressional District will live with the consequences of that problem.

Under this legislation, the ratepayers of the Pacific Northwest will take on an unnecessary economic burden in higher rates and an unnecessary safety burden with the proliferation of nuclear generating plants. This is a bum bargain. I urge you to oppose passage of this bill.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Les Aucoin", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

LES AUCOIN
Member of Congress