

HOME ADDRESS:
KEYSER, WEST VIRGINIA

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 21, 1974

Mr. James J. Hodl
Associate Editor
Appliance Service News
5841 West Montrose Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60634

HOS signed

Dear Mr. Hodl:

Thank you very much for your letter of recent date, together with the enclosure, relative to the gasoline shortage, particularly as it applies to the appliance service industry.

The Congress has been struggling for more than two months over legislation designed to bring the available supply of gasoline up to current demand.

A number of the States have been making allocations on a temporary basis. A sincere effort is being made, I think, to give priority to essential industries and to essential services. Obviously, during a trial period, some inequities may be discovered. These will be adjusted, I am confident, as the need is made apparent.

In general, allocations must be made on a State or local basis, inasmuch as needs differ in different parts of the country, and a National distribution of available supplies might be inappropriate.

It has been the intention of all or most plans to keep people at work, and thus, sustain the whole economy. Attention may have been focused on such large industries as the automobile industry, the steel industry, etc., because they are the most visible.

The appliance service industry does suffer from the scattered nature of the working group. It is an industry, however, which is important in every section of the Nation. The typical American household uses daily a surprising number of appliances. The failure of one or more of these appliances does affect daily living to an extent which can hardly be imagined.

Mr. James J. Hodl

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February 21, 1974

The problems arising from an energy shortage are vast and complicated. They must be attacked vigorously by everyone concerned. I shall continue doing all I can to be helpful.

With best wishes and kind personal regards to you and yours, I am

Sincerely yours,

HARLEY O. STAGGERS

APPLIANCE

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February 1, 1974

Rep. Harley O. Staggers
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

M. Burton
Please
prepare
FEB 6 1974

Dear Rep. Staggers:

At present, the appliance service industry is concerned about the current energy shortage. Gasoline is already in short supply and now there are predictions of fuel rationing. President Nixon's energy administrator William Simon has said that when rationing comes, few exceptions will be granted and that fuel will be allocated according to regional need. In Chicago, for instance, this would mean only 34 to 36-gallons per month.

Yet, operation of a service van or truck is vital in the service industry. These vehicles take the technician and all the parts and tools he will need to the house calls. But proposed rationing quotas would not provide service people with enough fuel to get to all the calls they now answer. Some calls would have to be scratched, and this would be intolerable for consumers.

That is why the service industry needs a priority rating to obtain fuel. This issue is so important to the industry that it merited a front page editorial in our publication, the Appliance Service News, which we have enclosed with this letter.

Our question to you is would you support a fuel allocation priority for the service industry? We are inviting you to read our front page editorial on this need and would like your comments on it. We would like to know your opinions on this vital consumer issue.

→ We would like to use your opinion in an article that will appear in our March issue. Since our deadline is approaching, your immediate attention to this matter would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Respectfully yours,

James J. Hodl
James J. Hodl
Associate Editor

An Editorial

If Gas Rationing Does Occur, Priorities For Service a Must

In 1973, factory shipments of appliances broke all previous records when sales hit 35,049,000 units. This was a whopping 13 per cent more than the units shipped in 1972, which at that time broke all industry records up to that time. This, we feel, tells the story of what can be expected for service in the future, since the need for service always follows the lead of appliance sales.

After the sale, service has always been an important commodity. During the period of World War II, the importance of maintaining the nation's appliances was reflected by the allocation of more gasoline to service people since their work contributed to the health and economy of the entire country. This importance has increased considerably over the years.

Currently, there is an extreme shortage of experienced service people and the industry has been working hard to train enough technicians to meet the ever increasing need for appliance service.

The industry has already been hit hard with consumer and lawmaker inspired

controls and regulations which have added to the woes generated by the short supply of technicians. Now the government is threatening gas rationing.

If gas rationing goes into effect, and it is rumored to be coming by March, there must be priorities for the service industry to avoid a catastrophe. If not, consumers

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Service Industry Needs Gas Priority

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will be deprived of the use of appliances necessary to their well being and there is the danger that technicians unable to get gas for their service vehicles will leave the field, increasing the shortage of service energy.

Associations involved in the service of domestic and commercial appliances, service management and parts distribution are now writing to William Simon, the President's energy administrator, advising him of their concern.

These groups are also advising Mrs. Virginia Knauer, the President's advisor on consumer affairs, of their concern for the repercussions that may result if the industry is not given consideration for gas priorities. With the industry already short of badly needed techs, complaints could reach avalanche proportions if the servicers are not given enough gas to make their rounds.

The servicing of appliances touches hospitals, restaurants, rest homes and institutions. Although many of these places have their priorities, it won't help the technician get to his job when he is needed.

In the home, the tech takes care of many appliances, including laundry equipment, refrigerating equipment, ranges, hot wa-

ter heaters, garbage disposers, vacuum cleaners and many, many more that are no longer considered luxuries but necessities to public health and welfare. Thus, it is imperative that servicers be given a priority if gas rationing goes into effect in the near future.

A priority would be especially needed in rural areas where it takes more time to travel and more fuel to go from appointment to appointment.

Members of the service industry must now contribute their voice to help prevent this impending situation that could plunge the whole field into an intolerable condition. If you want to have enough fuel to do your job if rationing comes, send your opinion now to: William Simon, U.S. Energy Office, Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20500. You can also voice your opinion on how your lack of fuel may hurt your customers by writing to: Mrs. Virginia Knauer, Presidential Committee on Consumer Interests, Executive Office of the President, Washington, D.C. 20506.

Your letter counts! But write now while the government is still deciding how to carve up the fuel supply before rationing is announced.

— J.J.C.