

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 1, 1974

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Dear Harley:

I wanted to acknowledge receipt of your letter of today's date to the President concerning S. 2589, the National Emergency Energy Act.

You may be assured I will make certain it is called to the President's prompt attention.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

*Bill*

William E. Timmons  
Assistant to the President

The Honorable Harley O. Staggers  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C. 20515

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce  
Room 2125, Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 1, 1974

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

Numerous press accounts report that you intend to veto the Energy Emergency Act which passed the House on Wednesday, February 27, and was forwarded to you for signature. I am writing to respectfully urge you to reconsider this matter and to allow this much-needed legislation to be enacted into law.

As you will remember, on November 7, 1973, you discussed the need for emergency legislation of this character with Congressional leaders. Because Senator Jackson and I had already introduced legislation of this purpose, you announced that you would not submit specific legislative requests but preferred instead to work with us and our committees. This we have endeavored to do. There is much in this legislation which you have requested and which I believe is required now if we as a government are to respond positively to the energy crisis.

Mr. President, the American people cannot be expected to tolerate the long lines at the gas pump much longer. This legislation equips you with the full authority to do something about it. The Administration is given the power -- tempered by Congressional veto -- to prevent wasteful and unnecessary energy consumption. Steps are authorized to be taken to begin to make full and efficient use of this nation's abundant coal supplies. You have been granted authority to require domestic production to proceed at its maximum efficient rate and permitted to compel the allocation of materials for energy production which are in short supply. Standby rationing authority is provided should you determine, after exhausting all other avenues, that you are unable otherwise to preserve the public health, safety, and welfare of this nation. States are to be granted assistance in



The President

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providing compensation for those whose unemployment is attributable to energy shortages. The consumer is provided with pricing protection in the petroleum market. And, perhaps most importantly, provision has been made to obtain complete and accurate data reflecting this nation's energy supply so that both the Administration and this Congress can measure the extent of the problem and fashion additional means to deal with it.

I know this legislation is extremely complex and controversial. I am aware that there are parts of it which you oppose. Certainly there are aspects of this legislation which I would have preferred to be done differently. But I urge you not to deny yourself the tools needed to respond to the needs of the American people simply because you disagree with the terms of some parts of this bill. As you know full well, the legislative process necessitates compromise. We have worked together, we have worked hard, and I firmly believe that the legislation before you is fundamentally sound.

I wish to emphasize, moreover, that this bill contemplates temporary measures to extend only for the next 14 months, until May 15, 1975. As we gain further experience and acquire additional information, amendments to the provisions may become necessary, but we cannot and should not defer action awaiting a more perfect solution to our problems.

I again respectfully urge you to withdraw your opposition to this legislation.

Sincerely,

  
HARLEY O. STAGGERS, M.C.  
CHAIRMAN

HOS:bf

*News release — from the office of*

## Congressman Harley O. Staggers

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SECOND DISTRICT  
WEST VIRGINIA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE MARCH 1, 1974

WASHINGTON- Congressman Harley Staggers of West Virginia has urged President Nixon to reconsider his opposition to the Emergency Energy Act to allow the government to "respond positively to the energy crisis."

In a hand-carried letter to the White House Staggers told the President, "I urge you not to deny yourself the tools needed to respond to the needs of the American people simply because you disagree with the terms of some parts of this bill."

The energy bill, which has passed both the House and Senate under the sponsorship of Staggers and Senator Henry Jackson, gives the President broad powers which he requested to deal with the fuel situation.

But the President has threatened to veto the bill because he objects to one provision which would reduce the price of domestic crude oil. The President maintains that this would reduce incentives for the oil companies to seek new oil supplies.

Staggers, however, says the provision still allows enough incentive while at the same time preventing the oil companies from making windfall profits at the expense of millions of sacrificing American consumers.

While admitting the bill may not be perfect, Staggers told the President, "The American people cannot be expected to tolerate the long lines at the gas pump much longer. We cannot delay action awaiting a more perfect solution."

Staggers pointed out that a key section of the bill would require accurate reports from the oil companies on their fuel supplies.



The bill prohibits the President from imposing gasoline rationing under any law until he can show that he has exhausted every other means of reducing gas consumption.

The wide-ranging legislation would give the President power to:

- Require many power plants to switch to coal.
- Compel absolute maximum production in the oilfields.
- Allocate scarce machinery used in drilling for oil.
- Set gas station hours.

The bill would also offer protection for independent gas station owners from being forced out of business by large oil firms and would provide compensation for workers who lose their jobs as a result of the fuel shortage.

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