

Washington Report

— By —

CONGRESSMAN WALTER B. JONES

During the closing hours of the first session of the 93rd Congress, legislation was enacted in an attempt to cope with the fuel shortage. The first bill was known as the Energy Reorganization Act of 1973. The purpose of the bill is to bring under the control of a single agency the various government sponsored research and development programs to provide the nation with new sources of energy. The bill provides for the Atomic Energy Commission to be divided into two components, the Energy Research and Development Agency (ERDA) and the Nuclear Energy Commission (NEC). ERDA will assume all the energy research and development functions, with NEC retaining the nuclear licensing and regulatory functions. The bill provides for the transfer of responsibilities to the newly created central agency from the Department of Interior, relative to the Office of

Coal Research including fossil fuel energy R&D and related activities conducted by the Bureau of Mines "energy centers," and the underground electric power transmission research. Also transferred to ERDA will be functions of the National Science Foundation relating to solar heating and cooling development, and to geothermal power development. The Environmental Protection Agency will transfer to ERDA programs relative to the development and demonstration of automotive power systems and of the technologies to control emissions of pollutants from stationary sources using fossil fuel.

It is believed that this consolidated approach to the serious question of shortages can best be handled by one agency rather than three or four separate agencies trying to find solutions.

Another legislative hassle developed over the Conference Report regarding the Energy Emergency Act. As previously explained, this is a bill which would give the President broad powers as they relate to rationing and issuing administrative directives such as controlled speed limits and the closing of gas stations at certain times. The main issue at stake was just how much authority Congress should attempt to retain, some feeling that the President should assume full responsibility while others of us believing that the Congress had already delegated too much power to the Administration and should assume some degree of responsibility at this critical time in the history of this nation. In any event, between the House and the Senate as well as the Conferees, deliberations consumed approximately six days in considering this legislation.

It is unfortunate that such critical legislation has to be considered in the closing hours of a legislative session, for in the haste to reach adjournment, all too often amendments are approved which sometimes prove to be not in the best interest of the people of this nation.

In their motion to adjourn sine die, the House agreed to reconvene on January 21, 1974; therefore, this column will be suspended until the House reconvenes, and I take this opportunity to wish each and everyone a happy 1974.



BAMBI'S A MOMMA . . . Bambi, a doe eyed beauty at Silver Springs' Deer Park, just gave birth to two wobbly legged fawns. Bambi was adopted by the Deer Park in Florida in July 1966, after she was abandoned by her mother and found wandering along State Road 40. Officials at the facility report that Bambi is a perfect mother and that she and her young ones are in excellent health.

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