

LES AuCOIN -- Record on

Environmental Issues

Congressman Les AuCoin has established an impressive record on environmental issues during the 95th Congress.

As a member of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Les is well placed to reflect the strong environmental sentiments of Oregon, a state described in a recent national opinion poll as the most environmentally conscious in the country.

The following are just a few examples of Les AuCoin's environmental positions.

WILDERNESS

Les AuCoin knows the value of wilderness areas. As an avid outdoorsman, he uses them himself. And he wants to preserve these areas for others.

Les AuCoin wants to get on with the job of completing the wilderness system in this country. He also wants to preserve a sound planning for wilderness, too. That's the way he has voted in Congress. Consider these examples:

Alaska Lands: Les played a leading role in giving a wilderness designation to the entire Arctic Wildlife Range and in creating the Copper River Delta Wildlife Refuge -- both in Alaska. The latter is particularly important because it's the sole nesting place for the world's population of dusky Canada geese, which winter in the Willamette Valley.

Oregon Islands: Les pushed a bill through the House designating 56 islands off the Oregon Coast -- from Tillamook Head on the north to Brookings on the south -- as wilderness areas. The reason? He wanted to give added protection to many species of waterfowl, and to the otter which has been threatened in recent years along the coast but now is making a comeback.

OIL SPILLS

Les AuCoin has campaigned vigorously for stricter standards governing oil tankers operating in U.S. waters. In fact, he was the principal co-sponsor of a bill that would make oil companies and tanker owners fully responsible for clearing up oil spills and paying for damages caused by spills. The bill has passed the House, but is still pending in the Senate. Les hopes that the recent oil spill near the confluence of the Willamette and the Columbia Rivers, one of the worst in the state's history, will serve to call attention to the need for Senate action.

Even while the oil spill bill is pending, Les AuCoin is continuing to work toward improvement in tanker safety and operation on the theory that prevention of an accident is better than making sure there's a cure.

STRIP MINING

Les AuCoin jointly introduced a bill, last year, that lays down strict environmental standard governing extraction of strip-mined coal. The bill, now law, places the onus

for restoring and reclaiming mine-damaged environments on the coal companies that profit from the extraction process and on consumers who benefit from coal company operations, rather than on all consumers indiscriminantly.

COAL SLURRY PIPELINE

When the coal slurry pipeline issue came to the floor of the House recently, Les AuCoin voted no. He took that action with good reason. He simply could not support a measure that would have made such expensive demands on sometimes scarce water supplies in the West.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Les AuCoin doesn't want to rely exclusively on nuclear power plants. He has consistently voted against funding for the Clinch River Breeder Reactor because this country hasn't solved the riddles of nuclear fission and hasn't developed a safe, effective way to store or dispose of spent fuel.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES

Les AuCoin supports the development of alternative energy sources such as wind, solar and geothermal power. One of many bills he has co-sponsored would provide low-interest loans to homeowners, school districts or small businesses to encourage use of solar energy.

BOTTLE BILL

Starting with his pioneering efforts in the State Legislature to draft Oregon's landmark "Bottle Bill," Les AuCoin has strongly supported efforts to reduce litter and conserve energy through recycling beverage containers.

Last year, for example, he co-sponsored the Beverage Container Reuse and Recycling Act, underlining the environmental improvements that would result from this version of a national "bottle bill."

SAVING THE WHALES

Les AuCoin has repeatedly expressed concern over the dwindling whale population. It should be a major international issue, he maintains. Two House resolutions co-sponsored by Les illustrate his concern: One calls for a 10-year moratorium on killing whales, while another creates an international organization charged with conserving the whale population. Last spring, he took an unusual action for a congressman by participating in a walk-a-thon to raise funds for the "Save the Whales" campaign sponsored by the international Greenpeace organization.

SAVING THE PORPOISES

During consideration of the "tuna-porpoise controversy" in the summer of 1977, Les AuCoin helped forge a bill to reduce the "porpoise kill quota" in tuna fishing, to penalize lax tuna captains whose kill quota exceeded the average, and to commit the tuna industry to more problem-solving research.

Hanford. In the wake of the Soviet reactor meltdown, Les called on the Department of Energy to shut down the Hanford nuclear reactor, located on the Columbia River and with many design similarities to the Chernobyl facility, until a thorough, independent safety review is conducted. Les has also pushed for toughening waste disposal guidelines and requiring the concurrence of affected states for Hanford's waste disposal activities.

Protecting Special Lands. Les, who helped write the landmark Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act of 1980, has used his clout on the powerful House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee to help protect critical lands in the Northwest and throughout the United States, including the Steens Mountain Recreation area; the Columbia River Gorge; the Long Island Cedar Grove, the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness Area; Cascade Head; Lake Tahoe; and Sweeney Ridge, California. And, Les' work on Rock Mesa in the Three Sisters Wilderness Area ended a 20-year controversy over pumice mining claims and finally made whole that critical wilderness area.

Columbia River Gorge. Les introduced landmark comprehensive legislation to protect one of the Northwest's greatest scenic treasures, legislation which may end years of impasse over how best to balance conservation and economic development in the Gorge.

Oregon Wilderness. Les convinced skeptical Members of Congress from around the country that Oregon's last few remaining wild lands controlled by the U.S. Forest Service need protection. Because Les made the Oregon Wilderness bill his top environmental priority, it sailed through the House. But he didn't stop there. He worked with Senator Hatfield to develop a final version of the legislation which doubled existing wilderness by statutorily protecting nearly one million acres of Oregon's remaining roadless areas.

Youth Conservation. A cosponsor of legislation which passed the House in both the 98th and 99th Congresses, Les has pushed to give new life to the Youth Conservation Corps. He has actively pushed to continue YCC activities in the National Forests, National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges, over objections from the White House.

Offshore Oil and Gas Development. For five years, Les has battled three successive Interior Secretaries, beginning with James Watt, who have ordered wholesale oil and gas development along the California coast. Les wrote the first oil and gas leasing moratorium to protect Oregon's offshore fisheries from development of a basin atop the San Andreas fault just 100 miles from the Oregon border.

Superfund. Working closely with conservation groups and citizen activists, Les helped move through the House of Representatives landmark legislation to strengthen our nation's hazardous waste cleanup laws. His support for key amendments allowing citizen suits and expanding communities' right to know about threatening hazardous substances in their areas earned him a 100 percent environmentalist record on House Superfund votes.

Environment



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Les is a leading voice in Congress for balanced management of our natural resources — one of the consistent front-line fighters to hold James Watt, and now William Clark, in check. From wilderness to offshore mineral development to protection of critical wildlife refuges, Les is Oregon's voice for the environment.

OREGON WILDERNESS — Les convinced skeptical Members of Congress from around the country that Oregon's last few remaining wild lands need protection. Because Les made the Oregon Wilderness bill his No. 1 environmental priority, it sailed through the House of Representatives. But he didn't stop there. He worked with Senator Hatfield to develop a final version of the legislation — one which doubles existing wilderness by protecting nearly one million acres of Oregon's remaining roadless areas.

PROTECTING SPECIAL LANDS — From his position on the House Appropriations Subcommittee — and over the objections of Secretary Watt — Les protected Rock Mesa in the Three Sisters Wilderness, the Bear Valley Wildlife Refuge in Klamath County, and Cascade Head on the Tillamook-Lincoln County line. For Rock Mesa, Les' initiative ended a 20-year controversy over pumice mining claims. Because of Les' action, the Three Sisters Wilderness has — finally — been made whole.

OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT — For three years, Les kept James Watt and his Interior Department from erecting oil rigs in Northern California waters which move northward into Oregon's offshore fisheries. Mr. Watt wanted to lease in a basin that sits atop the San Andreas fault, just 100 miles from the Oregon border. Les is now continuing to oppose reckless development that jeopardizes Oregon's fishing and tourist industries.

GORDA RIDGE — In his first meeting with the new Interior Secretary, William Clark, Les won an assurance that the Interior Department would not lease or develop offshore minerals in the Gorda Ridge off Oregon's Coast in 1985. Les got Secretary Clark to agree that not enough is known about the area to warrant what would amount to a fire sale in the Gorda Ridge.

COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE — Les continues to support legislation sponsored by the Friends of the Gorge which protects scenic values of the spectacular Columbia River Gorge.

NATIONAL BOTTLE BILL — After helping draft Oregon's landmark bottle bill over 10 years ago, Les is a co-sponsor of the national bottle bill.

CLEAR AIR ACT — Les continues to oppose any legislation which guts the Clean Air Act. In the 97th Congress, Les co-sponsored H.R. 5555, the Clean Air Act that strengthened provisions in the existing statute.

LES AuCOIN. POSITIVE RESULTS FOR OREGON.

Paid for and authorized by the Re-Elect Les AuCoin Committee.
A copy of our report is filed with the Federal Elections Commission and is available for purchase from the Federal Elections Commission, Washington, D.C.

CLINT W. COOK treasurer