

Vice Chairman's Statement



The Office of Technology Assessment has grown over the years as Congress realized the value of shared staff.

In my judgment, this organization of technical experts has greatly matured—both as a resource to Congress and as a useful source of information to the public. OTA reports and background papers are used to help frame policy debates here in Congress and are used by those ranging from academics to engineers in the field. And, it is important to note most of these studies would have been done in the House and the Senate by separate staffs if OTA'S reputation for fairness had not been established.

OTA'S recent study, *U.S. Oil Import Vulnerability: The Technical Replacement Capability*, was a very helpful document in the debate over energy policy. The study makes clear the Nation's growing dependence on imported oil, and our vulnerability in the event of disruption of foreign oil supply.

Another study, *Coping With An Oiled Sea*, has been very helpful to Congress. It got out the true facts about which oil spill cleanup measures are technologically feasible. Importantly, it told us that huge technological breakthroughs are not necessary, but good planning, training, and engineering are most helpful when addressing an oil spill.

OTA has done a good job providing Congress with sound technical analysis so that members of Congress and our staffs can make decisions based on the best facts available. OTA avoids waste and duplication because it is a resource shared by all the committees of Congress. In these times of tight budgets, I am glad we have such a resource—and believe we should do more to prevent duplication in basic staff research by the House and Senate.

I look forward to working with OTA in the future.

SENATOR TED STEVENS