

Friends of Bob Gragson

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"Energy and water are the two issues that will most affect our lives in the future -- especially here in northern California. If you think energy and water prices are high now, just wait. **Bob Gragson** has a better understanding of the problems we are likely to confront along these lines, and of the positive strategies that local communities can adopt, than anyone else I know in this region."

-- Richard Heinberg, author of *The Party's Over* (2003) and *Powerdown* (2004)

September 4, 2004

Dear Ukiah Voter:

Yes, this is a letter about a political campaign – but a political campaign with a twist. It appears to be the first political campaign of its kind in the United States and perhaps the world. It is a campaign that focuses on the coming peak production of oil and natural gas – limited fossil fuels – and how that event will have far-reaching effects in our local community.

You have an opportunity to make history and become a part of this important and innovative Ukiah City Council campaign!

Oil is a lifelong theme for me. As a child, I grew up surrounded by oil. Our family household income was generated from the oil industry in an Oklahoma town that boasted the first oil well in the state proudly displayed in its downtown park. The town in which I lived was built on oil money. My father was a research chemist for a petroleum company that at the time was the largest employer in the state. And when we traveled, I marveled at the oil derricks on the state government lawns in Oklahoma City.

Our trashcan was even a recycled oil barrel. Seven lots from my house was an oil well pumping out oil: I could smell it, and I could see it on the ground. Later, I watched as the oil wells disappeared because the oil was depleted.

In the weeks, months and years ahead, a new reality will emerge in our community. As we approach peak production of natural gas and oil this year and next year, we are embarking on a new era. The forthcoming gap between demand and supply of fossil fuels will severely impact our lives. We need only remember when oil production peaked nationally in the 1970s to understand what lies ahead. The difference between then and now is there are no more new places from which to import oil.

Most politicians won't discuss oil and natural gas depletion. They are either ignorant of it, or they fear it will lose them votes. This campaign is not about ignorance or fear however. It is about empowering ourselves in the face of perhaps the greatest challenge human beings may ever encounter.

I believe we must be proactive to the changes ahead. I envision community-wide educational campaigns to reduce energy consumption and vigorously transition our community to renewable energy. We must also develop programs like community gardens and seed banks, municipal compost production, car co-ops, equipment libraries, and localized manufacturing of solar technology. Simultaneously, we must promote affordable and sustainable housing and our social capital: the arts, sports, science and education. I have the vision and experience to work cooperatively to achieve this.

This campaign is also about forging the course for other similar campaigns to emerge across our country. I'm working in step with the Post Carbon Institute to help develop a model campaign to promote the impact that oil and natural gas depletion will have on our lives. (If you haven't yet heard much about this issue, I encourage you to read Richard Heinberg's *The Party's Over* and *Powerdown*, and Post Carbon Institute founder Julian Darley's *High Noon for Natural Gas*. Both authors help us see how our lives and our world are being imperiled because of our increasing dependence on these powerful and rapidly depleting resources.) I will also be interviewed by author/journalist Julian Darley about this groundbreaking campaign and the video produced will be on his internationally acclaimed news website at GlobalPublicMedia.com.

Should you choose to help elect me through your financial support of this campaign, my position on the city council in Ukiah will be a firm voice for citizen participation, for a focus on the future, for strong civic and ecological education, and for taking steps critical to surviving in a time when oil demand will exceed oil supply.

I have enclosed a sheet outlining my positions and a list of my qualifications. Please read them. And when you have finished, please consider supporting this campaign for our future with your vote, your time, and/or your money.

I need your support today for this important city council campaign. It's a campaign for your future and for our children's future. I am facing six other candidates in this election for two seats. To win a seat on city council on November 2nd, I really need your help and your vote!

You can support this campaign not only with your vote, but also with money, putting a yard sign in your yard, or volunteering to work on this campaign.

Your support of \$35, \$50, \$100, or \$250 is critical to the success of this campaign and urgently needed today. Please, write your check to "Friends of Bob Gragson" and return it in the enclosed envelope, or go to www.gragson.com or store.gragson.org to make an online contribution today. Whatever you can afford to contribute will help. (Please include your occupation and employer with contributions of \$100 or more as required by California law.)

Don't delay! Please send your contribution today. The campaign needs your support now. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bob Gragson

P. S. I've enclosed a sheet listing my position on some of the issues in this campaign. I think you will find them substantive, innovative and timely. I have also included my qualifications to represent you on city council. Please read them.

P. P. S. Your support is critical to the success of this campaign. If you believe in the values I espouse, I hope you will support it. Your contribution of \$35, \$50, \$100 or \$250 will help make the difference. Please make your check out now to "Friends of Bob Gragson" and send it in today! Or, if you want to make your contribution with your VISA, MasterCard, or Diner's Club card, go to www.gragson.com or store.gragson.org and make your contribution. (Please include your occupation and employer with contributions of \$100 or more as required by California law.) Thanks for your support!