

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCTION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL EQUAL RIGHTS ACT

HON. CARDISS COLLINS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Environmental Equal Rights Act to promote equity, justice, and community involvement in the selection of the location of waste facilities. My bill gets at the heart of the need to locate waste facilities in locations which minimize the total impact on the health and well-being of nearby residents from sources of contamination. It would establish a process for exercising our inherent rights respecting the development and evolution of our communities.

In the past, sites for many waste facilities have invariably been chosen for the wrong reasons. Since it is politically difficult to select any location, the choice has often come down to a question of political influence: Those with the least have lost.

The result is that too many facilities have been placed in communities populated largely by minorities and the poor. These sitings regularly occur irrespective of the suitability of the site, and of critical importance, irrespective of the degree to which the community is already exposed to the polluting facilities. It is a simple fact of life that these communities usually do not have the financial or political resources to compete on these issues with other neighborhoods. Consequently, as multiple facilities are placed in minority and poor communities, the residents of these communities face unjustifiably severe health hazards and have no vehicle with which to protect themselves from such exposures.

According to a 1992 University of Michigan study, the proportion of minorities in communities which have a commercial hazardous waste facility is about double that in communities without such facilities. The University of Michigan study found that, where two or more such facilities are located, the proportion of minorities is more than triple that of communities without a facility.

In a 1992 report, the Environmental Protection Agency corroborated the evidence of the disproportionate impact of contaminants or racial minority and low-income populations when it concluded that these groups experience higher than average exposures to selected air pollutants and hazardous waste facilities.

Currently, projected human health impacts of a new waste facility usually do not figure into the decision of whether or not to award a permit. Once again, recent studies have found that urban, minority communities are the most exposed to particulates, sulfates, and other contaminants.

The Environmental Equal Rights Act [EERA] would allow citizens of an environmentally disadvantaged community in which a waste facility has been proposed to be sited to challenge the siting. A successful challenge would pre-

vent the issuance of a permit for construction and operation of the proposed facility.

A challenge would be based on whether the proposed facility is located within 2 miles of another waste facility, Superfund site, or facility that releases toxic contaminants; and whether it is in a community that has a higher than average percentage of low-income or minority residents. The petitioner would also have to show that the proposed facility may adversely affect the human health or the environmental quality of the community.

Mr. Speaker, the Environmental Equal Rights Act will equip environmentally disadvantaged communities with basic tools to protect their environment and the health of their residents. These tools are necessary to compensate communities that are underrepresented and have fewer resources with which to protect themselves. We should all be able to agree that underrepresentation is an unacceptable basis for exposing people to substances which can impair mental development and cause harmful health conditions. To stop short of providing these rights would perpetuate the gross injustices and exposures to risks that have become all too common.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION ACT

HON. WILLIAM J. COYNE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce an important piece of legislation. This bill, the Economic Revitalization Act, would expand the Federal Government's role in encouraging local economic development efforts across the country.

Many communities across the country have experienced unprecedented job loss and economic dislocation in recent years. These communities are in desperate need of economic development activities that will provide new jobs and tax revenues.

Prior to my election to Congress, I served for a number of years as a member of the Pittsburgh City Council. My service on the city council provided me with substantial first-hand knowledge about the many difficult challenges facing State and local governments.

Since I left the city council to become a Member of Congress, the demands on State and local governments have increased substantially while the resources at their disposal have declined. In the last 15 years, the Federal Government has eliminated General Revenue Sharing and Urban Development Action Grants. It has also limited funding for programs like the Economic Development Administration and Community Development Block Grants.

At the same time, the Federal Government has imposed a number of unfunded mandates on State and local governments that require expensive new investments in infrastructure

like water and sewage treatment facilities. Such investments have clearly improved many Americans' quality of life, but they have also consumed large portions of State and local governments' scarce capital budgets, which might otherwise have been used to foster economic development.

Something needs to be done to target Federal economic development assistance at our most troubled communities. The empowerment zone/enterprise community legislation enacted in 1993 was landmark legislation, but the law only authorized empowerment zones and enterprise communities in 104 areas around the country. There are many more communities in this country that need this kind of help. Moreover, while the EZ/EC program will provide much-needed Federal assistance to the designated EZ/EC communities, the program does not provide adequate resources even for these communities to successfully address the difficult social problems that they face.

Consequently, I introduced a bill in 1993—shortly after the enactment of the EZ/EC legislation—that would provide economic development assistance to all of the local governments across the country that qualified as distressed communities.

This legislation would establish a new type of tax-exempt private activity bond, the distressed community economic development bond. The distressed community economic development bond would be targeted at communities that have been hard hit by population loss, job loss, slow growth, or military base closings. Communities which meet the bill's criteria for designation as distressed communities could issue tax-exempt bonds to promote a wide range of economic development projects within their jurisdictions.

This legislation was not adopted in the 103d Congress, so I am introducing it again today. I believe that this legislation would provide economically hard-hit communities with the necessary means to foster economic growth and create new jobs.

I do not pretend that this initiative would solve all of the problems of our most troubled communities. It could, however, constitute part of the solution. In light of the sharp decline in Federal support for State and local governments in recent years—and the concurrent growth in federally imposed mandates on those same governments—congressional action to encourage economic development is long overdue.

I invite my colleagues to join me as cosponsors of this much-needed legislation.

MARATHON GIRLS ARE FIELD HOCKEY CHAMPIONS AGAIN

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I am asking today that my colleagues join me in saluting

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

the Marathon High School girls field hockey team for successfully defending their New York State class D championship.

The team won its second straight championship by defeating Morrisville-Eaton in a close and hard fought contest at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, NY.

As last year, the community welcomed the victorious Lady Olympians as they returned. The volunteer fire department once again stirred excitement with wailing sirens and flashing lights, leading a parade through the center of the village.

I want to congratulate the team and let them know I am very proud of their performance. In marking their accomplishment, we applaud all athletic endeavors of young women everywhere and give a deserved pat on the back to the adults who have provided the guidance and example that have made these players champions.

Those are the parents, the coaches, the administrators, and the fans who have encouraged and enjoyed the play all year long.

And while they have brought fame to themselves, they have made their friends and their school, not to mention their community, proud as well.

These young people have learned what it feels like to win, but more importantly the value of camaraderie, teamwork, and discipline. They will likely remember these times the rest of their lives. They deserve to, and to have our sincere best wishes for the kind of success which only promises greater things to come.

The team consists of: Rebecca Gillette, Joanna Ryan, Amber Potter, Laurel Weiss, Kendra Shufelt, Amber Glave, Tina Owen, Samantha Strough, Bobbie Elwood, Kathy Hoyt, Jessica James, Jennie Lavens, Hilary Matson, Carla Tagliente, Katrina Roe, Darci Contri, Becky Smith, Allisa Altmann, Arlene Hallock, and Coach Karen Funk.

HONORING DR. GIL BELTAN,
EDUCATOR

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure and a true honor for me to recognize the many achievements of Dr. Gil Beltran who, for over 65 years, has dedicated his life to educating children at his school in Miami. Indeed, Dr. Beltran's unyielding commitment to the education of children is nothing short of remarkable.

He founded his school, La Luz, The Light, with the mission to provide students with the foundations of academic excellence while stressing the importance of serving one's community. The school was first inaugurated at the turn of the century in Havana, Cuba and then initiated again in Miami for the exiled Cuban-American community. Dr. Beltran's determination to educate those who yearned to be free in the United States, and to teach students the true meanings of the words "liberty" and "justice," has made him a true philanthropist of the south Florida community. One can measure the resounding success of Dr. Beltran's vision by witnessing the smiles and gratitude of the students and parents on graduation day.

Many Miami residents first learned how to read and write because Dr. Beltran's undying vision and commitment to the youth of south Florida. It should give all a great sense of pride to honor a man whose prescience continues to set a standard of excellence for all to admire.

RINZLER AND LUNTZ ARE RIGHT
ON TARGET

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, as the inexcusable Government shutdown drags on, Americans all over the country are justifiably furious that critical services have been halted and that hardworking Federal employees are being forced to work without pay.

In addition, many of our constituents are angry that Members of Congress continue to receive their full pay during this time of crisis. In fact, many of us have cosponsored legislation, as I have, to deny Members their pay during the budget shutdown.

Yesterday, the New York Times published an incisive op-ed piece written by two of my constituents, Carol Ann Rinzier and Perry Luntz. I commend this timely article to all of my colleagues.

[From the New York Times, Jan. 3, 1996]

CONGRESS SHOULDN'T GET PAID EITHER
(By Carol Ann Rinzier and Perry Luntz)

Almost exactly a year ago, Congress passed the Congressional Accountability Act, a much ballyhooed measure that requires the House and Senate to abide by the workplace and civil rights laws they enact for the rest of us. Alas, like so many things in life, this long-overdue legislation turns out to be less than meets the eye.

In an effort to minimize the effects of the Government shutdown on their constituents, Republicans in the House proposed last week that furloughed Federal employees go back to work without being paid, surely a new idea in free-market, conservative economics.

Afterward, someone asked Representative Tom DeLay of Texas, the House majority whip, whether he would consider giving up his own salary during the crisis. No way, said Mr. DeLay, explaining that, like every other member of Congress, he isn't a Federal employee—he is a "constitutional officer."

Well, we've reread our copy of the Constitution, and frankly the distinction seems a bit arcane to us.

True, members of Congress are specifically mentioned in the Constitution Article I, Section 5 says that "Senators and Representatives shall receive a compensation for their services, to be ascertained by law and paid out of the Treasury of the United States." Cabinet members and Federal judges also get a mention, later on, but other workers—curators at the Smithsonian, say—do not.

But every Federal paycheck originates in an appropriation requiring money from the Treasury, whose funds come, in large part, from income taxes. That should give everyone of us the inalienable right to put in our 2 cents. Or to take it out.

Members of the House and Senate earn a base salary of \$133,600 a year (those in leadership positions get more). And don't forget the generous benefit package: life insurance, health insurance, per diem travel and a nifty pension. Mr. DeLay's base salary alone costs

each of America's more than 115 million individual taxpayers 1.2 cents a year.

As conscientious citizens, we have always paid our taxes, regardless of our political gripes. Even though one of us was tear-gassed in 1971 by an overzealous guard at the Nixon White House, protecting it from throngs of balding, middle-aged Vietnam War protesters and their children, the Internal Revenue Service got paid the following year anyway.

This time, however, we plan to draw a line in the sand. Having voted to obey its own laws, members of Congress should be man (or woman) enough to live up to that requirement. Before Tom DeLay votes for trimming Medicare, he should whistle down his own Government-financed health insurance. If he expects Federal workers to show up for free, so should he.

Until then, he can forget our helping to pay his salary. Come April 15, our joint tax return will be 2 cents short. That ought to send a message: keeping Congress in line is a hard job, but somebody has to do it.

100-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE
FOUNDING OF TIGERTON

HON. TOBY ROTH

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to wish a happy 100th birthday to the village of Tigerton, WI.

We are not only celebrating a great town—we are also celebrating the people who built a great town.

The people of Tigerton are the kind of Americans about whom Abraham Lincoln said: "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven."

Tigerton lies in the heart of Shawano County, a scenic region in northeast Wisconsin known far and wide for its fishing, snowmobiling, golf, swimming, boating, camping, hiking, and biking.

Tigerton's abundant forests are home to abundant deer and small game, which attract legions of hunters.

In fact, Tigerton was settled more than 100 years ago by hard-working people in the timber industry.

The Tigerton Lumber Co., was formed in 1887, and the town of Tigerton was incorporated shortly afterward in 1896.

From that time, the village of Tigerton has grown to its current population of more than 800 citizens.

The village's lumber heritage is preserved by the Tigerton Lumber Co., which is still going strong. Each year, in the last weekend of August, Tigerton Lumberjack Days are held to celebrate the town's main industry.

On Lumberjack Days, the people of Tigerton can get together and enjoy log cutting, sawing, and piling shows, as well as enjoy a corn roast, bingo, rides, music, and bow shooting.

The centennial celebration will culminate during this year's Lumberjack Days, with a parade on August 26.

The opening ceremony will be held at the Tigerton High School gymnasium on January 14. On that day, the Tigerton High School band, and civic figures from the village and the State, with the people of Tigerton to look back on the past 100 years and look forward to the next century.