

the lack of initiative on the part of the Clinton administration to make these planes as safe as they can be is only the tip of the iceberg, but the Republicans are going to fix these aircraft. We are going to be making these Harriers as safe as they can possibly be, and we will be funding upgrades to the F-14's to make them as safe as they can be.

I am happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. DORNAN. I flew the Harrier for the fourth time last August 8. Outstanding pilots down at Cherry Point and also at Yuma. It is a unique aircraft. It has stolen the show at every air show for over 2½ decades. But it is a difficult airplane to fly. And I will join in this fight, and I can guarantee you we will prevail.

I did not know an F-14 crashed today. Where did that happen?

Mr. HUNTER. That happened on the East Coast, I think at Oceana.

Mr. DORNAN. Right. Well, we will do the best we can.

Mr. HUNTER. That was an F-14B model crashed today.

Mr. DORNAN. Right. If we were in Israel, there would be no question that their first line of defense would get what they needed to be safe.

□ 1800

ADVANCES BROUGHT ABOUT BY REPUBLICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. METCALF). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, when I came to Congress 3 years ago, I was really appalled, like many other Americans, to find out that Congress really did not have to live under the laws that they imposed on everyone else.

I remember, when I ordered signs for my district office, I attempted to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Then I came back to Washington and was shocked to find out that in Washington, they did not comply with the ADA Act, and they did not comply with the rest of the rules and regulations.

It was ironic, shortly thereafter, that I had visiting constituents from my district and around the country who were visually impaired. I really was embarrassed to see those folks try to find their way around this place, this maze, without any proper, even common courtesy identification for those with a disability.

I wrote on February 26, 1993, to the Democrat committee chairman who was in charge of the House oversight at that time. Mr. Speaker, I include that letter for the RECORD.

The letter referred to is as follows:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 26, 1993.

Hon. CHARLIE ROSE,
Chairman, Committee on House Administration,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: My recent experience in ordering signage for my district

offices in Central Florida has prompted me to ask why the House of Representatives should not comply with a simple and necessary provision of the Americans with Disability Act with regard to use of braille for blind and visually impaired people.

After laborious efforts to get local district office signs approved by the committee on House Administration, the sign company informed me that ADA regulations also required that the suite numbers be in braille. After inquiring with committee staff as to why this was not addressed in the Congressional Handbook, I was informed that the House was exempt from the regulation. I did, however, request the addition of braille to my signs.

It was ironic in that the same week this happened, representatives for the blind and visually impaired around the country were visiting their Members of Congress and no Member suites in the House Office Buildings are equipped with braille signs.

I would like to request that House rules add braille directional signs located in the interior of local district offices and in the House offices buildings. I urge that consideration be given to this much needed service to our visually impaired citizens.

Sincerely,

JOHN L. MICA,
Member of Congress.

Rather than reading the whole letter that I wrote to the chairman of the Committee on House Oversight, I will summarize it. I told him our experience, that here we are, a Congress telling people to comply with the laws, and I just had these folks with visual infirmities and disabilities in the hallways, trying to find their way around the Capitol. Why could we not at least give them the courtesy of labeling our offices in compliance with ADA? I never got a reply. I brought it up again, and I asked and begged.

The American people made some changes here then. On the first day of the 104th Congress we passed, remember, the Congressional Accountability Act. That said that every Member of Congress and Congress must comply with the laws they impose on everyone else. Most people do not know that that is now the law. Sometimes around here there are great battles and little victories.

I am here tonight to tell you about one little victory. Here is the little victory. Going up around the Capitol Building and in my office, and I am so proud of this little improvement, little victory, are these signs. They are placed in compliance with ADA. If you are visually impaired, you can even find out whose office you are in. This is a small success, but we said when we took control of this Congress we were going to make some changes. We were going to make Congress obey these laws. This is one little victory that I am so proud of.

Not only did we do that, but how thrilled I was today to also find another sign which was going up. Heaven forbid we should have maps that should help those visually impaired to find their way around the maze of the Capitol Building, but we have these, and actually you can put your hands across these, and those visually im-

paired and who read Braille, they can find their way around this maze.

So Republicans said they would make changes, and they are making changes. I know this is not changing the world as we know it; it is not changing everything, our freshman program, but it is a beginning.

There are some other things that people probably do not know about what we have done with the Congress and the congressional budget. I want to take a minute to thank, first of all, the gentleman from California, BILL THOMAS, who is chairman of the Committee on House Oversight, for his actions and leadership on this issue and other issues.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans said they would cut the cost of operating this Congress, the legislative branch, and they did. We cut a quarter of a billion, \$250 million, out of our budget. That is done.

Republicans said they would cut congressional staff, and we reduced the staff on the Hill somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,000 positions. I chaired the Civil Service Subcommittee, which was three subcommittees before. It had 54 staffers. We operate it with 7. We said we were going to make changes. We did make those changes. Republicans said they would privatize capital operations, and we did.

EARTH DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, my purpose tonight is to talk about Earth Day and the lessons of Earth Day and what it means for us now in 1996. I think many of our constituents know that Earth Day is 26 years old now. It will take place this year on April 22, and the first Earth Day was in April 1970.

The reason we are concerned and the reason that several Democrats are here tonight to talk about Earth Day is because we are very concerned that this Congress, under the Republican leadership of the gentleman from Georgia, NEWT GINGRICH, has essentially tried to roll back the bipartisan effort that has been made in the House of Representatives, in the Senate, by Presidents of both parties over the last 25 years to try to improve our laws and our enforcement with regard to environmental protection.

In the last 14 or 15 months or so that we have been here in this Congress, we have seen day after day, week after week, efforts by Speaker GINGRICH and the Republican leadership to weaken the laws that have been on the books, and to provide less funding for enforcement and investigation against polluters who are violating those laws.

Before I go on, though, I will yield to the gentlewoman from Florida [Mrs. MEEK] who would also like to address

this issue. I am very pleased she is here tonight, because I know how important Earth Day is to her, and how important environmental protection is to her.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE].

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Earth Day, I rise to talk about some of the successes and failures since the first Earth Day in 1970. I have a vivid recollection of Earth Day and what it has done for all populations.

As a result of the increased awareness of environmental problems that was a direct result of Earth Day, the landmark legislation to create the Environmental Protection Agency passed the United States Senate in 1970 without a single dissenting vote, ushering in a new era of America's stewardship of our air, our water, and our land.

Mr. Speaker, we have made great strides over the years in cleaning up our air and our water. My home State of Florida has been a national leader in protecting these precious resources. But there are those who have been left out in the rising tide of environmental quality, which has not lifted all of the boats.

Mr. Speaker, since that original Earth Day, we have learned that racial minorities and low-income people experience high-than-average exposures to selected air pollutants, hazardous waste facilities, and to contaminated fish and agricultural pesticides in the workplace.

In 1992, a National Law Journal Investigation found that penalties against pollution law violators in minority areas were lower than those imposed for a violation in largely nonminority area. They also found the government took longer to address these hazards in the communities. In addition, they found that the racial imbalance occurred whether the community was wealthy poor.

Discrimination against racial or ethnic groups and against the poor in environmental efforts cannot be condoned. The effort to fight this discrimination is known as the environmental justice movement. It is becoming a very strong movement.

Many of my colleagues know, as most of the country knows, that the current Republican leadership has assaulted the environment to serve special interests at the expense of the land, the water, the air, and the health of the people of the United States. Through budget cuts and legislative riders, the Republicans have targeted not only the environment, but also the minority groups and the poor. Not only is their so-called environmental agenda good for polluters, it is bad for the environment, and it is worse for poor people in poor communities.

Mr. Speaker, we need clean air and clean water, just as any other person needs it, as much as the people from other communities. The poor just as much as the rich need dangerous waste sites cleaned up. Poor people do not

have air filters, water filters, or vacation homes to escape from these environmental hazards. They do not have lobbyists or money to donate to influential committee members to slant legislation in their favor. But we need to open our ears here in the Congress and listen to these people as we consider environmental laws in Congress.

Polluted sites in poor urban areas often stand for years as health and environmental hazards. I know this because of the district I serve. They are eyesores, they are a breeding ground for crime, and places where development of industry and jobs should be revitalizing the community, but these environmental hazards are there preventing this.

At the same time, new businesses are developing areas far from the cities and the city labor pool, destroying vegetation and wildlife, and duplicating investments in infrastructure that have already been made in these urban and poor areas. This makes no sense, no environmental sense and no common sense, Mr. Speaker.

Dangerous waste sites must be cleaned up. I have introduced, last year, a bill, H.R. 1381, the Comprehensive Economic and Environmental Recovery Act of 1995, that would help achieve this goal. My bill and a lot of others would provide low-interest loans to stimulate voluntary cleanup of contaminated areas in targeted urban areas, and ensure that local people are hired to do the work. My bill also includes provisions for a training program so that local people can learn the skills necessary for environmental remediation.

Mr. Speaker, I am not the only one who has sponsored such legislation, but this Congress needs to pay that more attention. The gentleman from Michigan, Mr. DINGELL, one of our colleagues, in his Superfund Reform Act of 1995 had provisions that would address this environmental justice. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, these sections were not included in the Republican bill, thereby setting back the cause of environmental justice.

One provision of the Dingell bill would have required that the EPA study priority-setting, response actions, and public participation at waste sites to determine whether EPA's conduct was fair and equitable to the population, to the race, to the ethnicity and income characteristics of affected communities.

Why are Republicans unwilling to even allow a study of this issue? What are they afraid of finding out? Another provision in the Dingell bill similar to my provision would authorize a demonstration program for recruitment and training of local people in remediation activities and encourage the hiring of disadvantaged persons from the affected community who have been trained in remediation skills.

Again, this provision was not included in the Republican bill. Poor and minority communities do not deserve

to be the dumping ground for the country. My home State of Florida has shown leadership in environmental justice by establishing a commission to collect information and address this issue head on. In this Congress, however, we are regressing, as I see it, moving backward, as we are in so many environmental areas. We would be even further behind if it were not for the strong support of the President for environmental justice and for improving the environment.

For example, his executive order on environmental justice will address that problem. This year, as we celebrate Earth Day, let us remember that environmental protection decisions should not be based on race, ethnicity, creed, or on wealth. Let us recommit ourselves to an effective and fair environmental policy so that the tide of environmental quality will rise and lift all boats. We do pay attention to that as Earth Day descends upon us. I thank the gentleman very much.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, if the gentlewoman will just let me comment briefly on some of the themes she mentioned, because I think they were very important, first of all it is interesting, coming from the State of New Jersey, which of course is a very densely populated State, New Jerseyans tend to think of Florida as having more open space, more pristine area. It is not always the case, but that is the general impression.

The fact that you are here talking about some of the urban areas and eyesores, I do not even tend to think that is true in the State of Florida, but obviously it is, and it goes to point out to me how universal the concerns are about the environment.

The other thing I wanted to mention is that I think it is so crucial to stress the need to have Federal programs to help with the cost of cleanup. The gentlewoman mentioned specifically, I think she was making reference to the Superfund program or something like that.

One of the biggest criticisms that I had of the Republican leadership is when the Superfund bill came up for reauthorization before our Committee on Commerce, we had Republicans who were making statements to the effect that "We do not really need the Superfund anymore, because that can be dealt with by the States and the localities. They can deal with those hazardous waste sites, they can come up with better ways of funding and providing cleanup of hazardous waste sites on the State or local level."

I know that is simply not true. New Jersey, which has probably done more than any other State to clean up sites that are not on the Superfund list, nonetheless continues to have problems in terms of coming up with the financing, and particularly when we are dealing with urban areas where the property tax base is not there; for them to find the money to do that kind of cleanup is just not going to happen,

which is why we need a Superfund program.

I also appreciate the fact that the gentlewoman brought up this whole issue of environmental justice and that movement, because too often I think people associate the environmental movement with rich people or the elite, and you point out very well that that is simply not the case, that people who live in urban areas, poor areas, have just as much, if not maybe more, to be concerned about when it comes to environmental cleanup.

The last theme, if I could mention it, the whole idea with regard to jobs and the environment; your point that when we clean up sites, when we deal with environmental protection, we are creating jobs, that is so true. One of the biggest criticisms I have of the Republican leadership is that they constantly try to juxtapose the environment versus jobs; that somehow they are mutually exclusive, and to the extent we clean up the environment, we displace people. That is simply not true.

□ 1815

The fact of the matter is that environmental protection and the progress we have made over the last 26 years since Earth Day in 1970 has really actually created more jobs and created a better economy and allowed for more job creation. I appreciate the gentlewoman's coming here tonight and expressing her views.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Oregon [Ms. FURSE].

Ms. FURSE. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE]. I guess I am here to warn the American people about what I call 1-day environmentalism. Interest in Earth Day really has to be continued and kept in people's minds throughout the year. It is a yearlong problem to keep protecting the environment and we need to do that.

I would be the first, Mr. PALLONE, to say that the environment is not a partisan issue. Americans, regardless of their political persuasion, want and need clean air to breathe and clear water to drink. They are concerned about it.

There are many Republican Members in this body who are strong environmental leaders, but the Republican leadership of the Congress has not been friendly to the environment. I think that that is the point that we need to stress, that it is the way we do things beyond the bills that are introduced. We have to look at what happens behind the closed doors or in the economy, in the budget deliberations.

I think that the Republican leadership learned very quickly that the American people did not want a frontal attack on the environmental laws, because the American people believe that the environment needs to be protected and they also feel confident that we have passed a lot of laws that have protected the environment. So instead the

leadership, under the disguise of what they call deficit reduction and balancing the budget, in fact put environmental laws on a starvation diet.

What happened was, rather than having a debate about environmental laws, whether they were important, whether we wanted them, whether we could afford them, what happened instead was that there was a slashing of the funds for the enforcement of environmental laws, and we all know in every community that you cannot enforce laws if you do not have the money there to do that.

For example, I do not know if people around the country know that the Environmental Protection Agency's budget was cut by 21 percent and their law enforcement account was cut by even more, by 25 percent. What does this mean?

It means that the people who we hire to protect the environment have not had the opportunity nor the budget to go out and even inspect the facilities they are supposed to inspect. That means the American people's health is put at risk, and yet they are perhaps not aware that these things are going on because they have not seen the law actually taken down, so I ask that the American people look very carefully at these budget decisions.

I was pleased that the gentleman mentioned this whole issue of jobs and the environment. I have a report here that was put together by a whole group of very well known economists, and it is called "Economic Well-Being and Environmental Protection in the Pacific Northwest."

What these economists show—and they are not Republicans or Democrats, they are economists—what they show is that there is a direct link between a clean environment and a healthy economy, that those two things go completely together. Of course we have seen that particularly in the Northwest.

The Northwest, the population is growing rapidly, and one of the reasons over and over and over again given by people who move into the Northwest is they come there because of our wonderful environment and the fact that we are on the cutting edge of environmental protection laws. So people are moving to that.

I find that some of the Republican leadership have forgotten why we have Earth Day, why we have these laws. I remember when the Cuyahoga River caught fire. Can you imagine a great, powerful river so polluted that it caught fire? It was the stimulus for the Clean Water Act.

In my own State, we have a great river called the Willamette River that flows through the biggest city in Oregon. Just a few years ago that river was unsafe to swim in, our children couldn't use it, there were no salmon in that river.

Thanks to the Clean Water Act, that has been reversed. We now have a clean river, we have salmon in that river.

But if we cut the budget as the Republican leadership is suggesting, we will not be able to enforce those wonderful laws that have protected our environment and our people.

So I think that we really have to focus on these cuts. These cuts in the budget are, in my view, extreme and unwise and they are underhanded. If we are going to say that everyone agrees that we must protect the environment, we must be green all the way through. We cannot be green on Earth Day, put on a little green hat, put on a little green tie, a little green suit and say, look, we are pro the environment.

What we really have to do is say we are pro the environment when it comes to making those hard decisions on the budget. We cannot go behind closed doors where the American people are not there and cut these budgets and ravage these environmental laws.

So I challenge the leadership to put their money where their mouth is on Earth Day and start funding these environmental laws again, because then we will indeed be a clean environment and we will give the American people what poll after poll shows they want. They want these laws to be in place.

I am very glad you are doing an Earth Day event, but I do think we need to say it goes further than 1 day. It goes throughout the year, and we need to be honest with the American people.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE].

Mr. PALLONE. I appreciate what the gentlewoman from Oregon [Ms. FURSE] said. The gentlewoman again points out some very important themes, I think, that we need to stress for Earth Day.

First of all, there has been tremendous progress. You talk about clean water. My district is totally on the water, either on the Atlantic Ocean or the Raritan Bay or the Raritan River.

In the late 1980's, 1988, 1989, when I was first elected and came down here, we had beach closings. Some of the beaches were closed the entire summer because of the wash-ups that were coming from New York and north Jersey. Now that is totally changed. In the last few years the water has been relatively pristine.

A lot of it has just been because of Federal grants and loans to the local municipalities, to the counties, to upgrade their sewage treatment plants. Money is a very important factor here. I think a lot of people deemphasize money, but when you talk about clean water action money means a lot, because money means you can build the treatment plants, that you can do the enforcement, go out and catch the polluters, you can do the investigations.

When the Republican leadership starts to cut back as they have on these grants, we are getting less loans now for clean water because of cutbacks with these stopgap spending measures. We have less environmental cops on the beat, so to speak, less investigation being done, and the direct

result of that is that we are going to see more pollution going into our waterways reversing, hopefully not too much, but reversing the trend of the last 25 years.

The other thing that I wanted to point out that you stressed, I think, as well is that the problem that we face is with the Republican leadership. I think that when Americans went out and voted for a new majority, a new Republican majority in 1994, none of them, or very few of them, thought that they were electing a Republican majority that was going to put into leadership positions people that were going to make an antienvironmental agenda part of their program here in the House of Representatives. That is what we have seen with Speaker GINGRICH, with DICK ARMEY, with some of the other Members who are in the Republican leadership. They have on a daily basis put forward legislation that would weaken environmental laws. It is not so much the individual perhaps Republicans that are doing this but the leadership. But they are the elected leadership and we have to hold them responsible for what is happening down here. It is a fact that this is what they are doing. I want to thank the gentlewoman for joining us here today.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PALLONE. I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. WISE. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for doing this once again. You have been a tireless fighter in environmental causes. Let me just say I too join as everyone in this Chamber, Republican and Democrat, in appreciating the progress that has been made over the last 25 years and also saying we do not want it rolled back. But what happens is people forget how the progress was made. The progress was made by being willing to fund the environmental programs that are passed, the progress was made by being able to do the enforcement, the progress was made by people standing up and saying here are a set of standards and we are going to vigilantly enforce them. The problem is if you cut back the enforcement 25 percent, what message are you sending out? I too like everyone in this Chamber have my own memories of the Kanawha River in Charleston, WA, in which when I was growing up you were warned not to swim in it, children getting meningitis every summer, and the pollution that was in those rivers. Today because of an effort made across the board, from environmentalists to industry, to government, the result is that the Kanawha is clean again and that for the first time fresh water fish are being pulled out of it, for the first time people are now feeling good about the Kanawha. Same thing with our air. The air used to be atrocious in the Kanawha Valley with the second highest number of solid particulates in the country 25 years ago. That is no longer the case. Everyone delights in that. So

no one wants to roll back the clock. The only problem is the way you keep the clock ticking is to make sure that you keep the enforcement going and that you keep the EPA able to do its job. Earth Day fascinates me, hearing everyone say that we are all going to go out and plant a tree or do something and I do not make light of planting trees but trees cannot overcome a lot that is being done to the environment. But Earth Day in some ways has become the Easter service of environmentalism, the one day where everybody shows up, the one day where everybody brings a shovel, wears a bonnet, and comes out and celebrates. But the problem is you have got to be in the church or in the movement every day, every week. And so Earth Day can remind us. Indeed, just like Easter, it is good to have people coming out and renewing those ties. But then the test is whether or not that carries over to the next day and to the next week.

There is a point that I think ought to be made. Sometimes I hear the talk of burdensome regulation but it should be made that to step back now is actually bad for business. We have a number of companies in the Kanawha Valley and in West Virginia that have spent great sums to comply with the law and indeed many of our companies have greatly reduced emissions voluntarily far beyond what was required. What kind of message do we send out now if you say we are going to step back, that we are not going to fund enforcement so that that person who has always been skating right on the edge, who has not been willing to make the commitment, who has always played a bit fast and loose or who simply has not been willing to upgrade as fast as others have, they suddenly get rewarded? We give them a bonus for having never been as enthusiastic as others in the business community have been?

The thing that has impressed me in talking to our chemical industry at home is they understand the progress that has been made and they are committed to continuing to make it. But it gets a lot harder for them to justify if they see somebody else that may get off the hook now because that EPA inspector can get by now once every 6 years or something along those lines and only under the rarest circumstances. I support a tough enforcement program. That is why I voted against cutting the funding 25 percent.

There is a controversial pulp mill, for instance, that is now being debated, whether or not to construct in my area. Some say that it ought not to be built, others urge that it should. Regardless of how you feel, the best way to determine what the environmental impact will be is with a strong EPA. That is why I voted for the funding that would give the EPA the ability to continue doing its studies that are so necessary.

Environmentalism is good for business and indeed we are seeing more and more businesses learn that and make profits from it as well.

Finally, I just want to say, I do not think anybody want to hurt anybody but if you have got a doubt as to whether or not there needs to be continued rigid enforcement, just look at your tap in your kitchen or the faucet where you children brush their teeth and ask, am I totally confident about what is coming out of that tap and will I be totally confident if these cuts go through? Ask the victims and their families in Milwaukee, where 100 people died just a couple of years ago from cryptosporidium in the water supply. Ask those who have been under a boil water order, which is not uncommon. I wonder why it is regrettably that bottled water seems to be a growth industry in our supermarkets. What that tells me is that the job is not only not finished but it must be even more aggressively pursued.

So we have made progress, everybody agrees on that. But there is a price to progress and there is a need to make sure we keep the progress that we have made as well and to continue to progress. I thank the gentleman for all he has done to keep that in front of the American people.

□ 1830

Mr. PALLONE. I appreciate the gentleman's remarks. If I could just add again a couple of things that you pointed out and bring them back to this issue of what the Republican leadership has been doing in this House, one of the things that we keep hearing from the Speaker and Republican leadership is we do not need the national laws, the environmental protection on the national level, because the States are doing a good job. Twenty-five years after Earth Day we can send those responsibilities, if you will, to enforce the environment, to protect the environment, back to the States.

As the gentleman so well points out, if each individual State has different laws when it comes to Superfund or clean water or whatever it happens to be, that does not solve the problem, because you get forum shopping; in other words, where a company will say "I will not go to West Virginia. I will go to another State, because they have weaker laws." And if each State starts competing, if you will have to have weaker environmental protection to attract industry or whatever, then the common denominator gets lower and lower.

Mr. WISE. I am from West Virginia and the gentleman is from New Jersey. Both are centers for the chemical industry. If you want to start a race for the bottom, pitting us against each other, each State having to set its own standards, as opposed to having a minimum Federal standard that at least sets the minimum benchmark, we all lose in that regard.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield such time to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI] who has been an outspoken protector of the environment here in the House.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and for his leadership on this important issue, and for calling this special order this evening.

I would like to follow up with the colloquy you were having with the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE] on the idea that we absolutely do need Federal standards. Not only do we need them, because you would have a race to the bottom as States might wish to attract certain kinds of industries which would not have to comply with State law, but also because pollution knows no State boundary. Without minimum environmental standards set by Federal law and Federal enforcement actions, the health of our communities, the environment and economy would be compromised across the board.

Testimony submitted by the Citizens Panel of the Chesapeake Bay shows that Federal oversight and enforcement helped States work cooperatively to address environmental problems. Before the creation of the EPA, the six States on the Chesapeake Bay watershed allowed the waters to become severely polluted. Without a strong Federal enforcement presence, citizens in States like Virginia, which had cut its environmental budget by 26 percent, would have little recourse against pollution coming from other States.

It is hard for young people to remember or even to know how it was before the EPA and before Earth Day. In the 40 years that the Democrats have been in control of Congress, great progress, as the gentleman has indicated, has been made. Twenty-five years ago my own beautiful San Francisco Bay could be smelled before it could be seen. I hate to tell you that. Major rivers caught on fire from industrial pollution. The Great Lakes resembled stagnant toxic pools rather than centers for recreation and commerce.

Since then, national environmental laws have led to cleaner air, safe drinking water, and better controls of toxic waste and hazards. But the work is far from done, and the Republican assault on environmental budget will hamper such efforts.

Due to recent cuts, the EPA has halted 68 waste cleanups in communities around the Nation. In New Jersey, your State, Mr. PALLONE, 81 Superfund sites need to be cleaned up.

I had an able article from a California paper, "Strapped EPA limits cleanups. With funds cut off, agency slashes staff, narrows work to 10 of the most hazardous sites in California." This means that the head of the EPA in our region has kept a skeletal crew of 35 to 40, down from 900, to oversee the most serious problems and to tend to the other business.

So we are faced with a terrible, terrible choice. This is not about only endangered species; this is about endangering the health of the people of our country, endangering our children. We are talking here about clean air, clean water, safe drinking water.

I once has a volunteer in one of my campaigns, and when we asked her why

she was attracted too come into a campaign, she said, "I realize that politics has something to do with clean air and clean water, and I guess I have to be involved in politics, at least as long as I breathe air and drink water." And that is so true.

What has happened since Earth Day 26 years ago, the first Earth Day, is that the people have become engaged. Our Republican colleagues see the resistance to their backward looking policies. Now they are trying to give the appearance of being green on Earth Day.

But while they may try to act green for a day, the record shows that this has been the worst environmental Congress ever. The Republican Congress has attempted to roll back years of environmental progress in order to favor special interests.

Because of Republican cuts, EPA has missed thousands of inspections and enforcement actions, cleanups have been slowed at 400 toxic waste sites, and stopped at 60 Superfund sites. Six rules to clean our waters have been delayed, causing hundreds of millions of pounds in pollution that could have been prevented, and old growth forests are being logged without environmental protection. This is a serious, serious assault on the environment.

I heard our colleague talk about the environment and economics. I wanted to cite a report from California that says that, to the contrary, the environmental regulations do not produce a loss of jobs. The report that we have from the California State Senate shows clearly that rather than losing jobs, it promotes jobs. It promotes an environmental protection industry, it promotes the fishing industry, which depends on a clean environment. This whole methodology that there is a job loss because we are trying to protect clean air and clean water is just that, mythology and not reality. It is an excuse to take actions, but it is not a reason to do so. So there is a great deal at risk.

I want to commend President Clinton for standing firm in this budget fight, standing firm to say, as Vice President GORE reiterated today, that he will veto legislation that has harmful environment riders or harmful anti-environment riders in them. Even with the riders gone, I am glad the President stood tall on the issue, in terms of the cuts to EPA which we have been talking about this evening and which have such damaging impact on the environment.

I would say to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] I serve on the Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, and on that committee we hear from scientists all the time. What they tell us is that pollution prevention is disease prevention. This is not just an environmental issue, if you could say "just an environmental issue." It is a public health issue. The parents of this country, the families of

this country, as the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE] said, have to have the confidence that when their children go to the faucet and pour a glass of water, that they are not damaging their health.

So we have to have Earth Day, we have to uphold the principles of Earth Day every day of the week and every day of the year. And in this body we have a responsibility to make sure that whatever we vote for here is in furtherance of protecting the environment, and we must reject the extreme proposals of the Republican majority to set us back on the last generation of improvement in the environment.

Once again I want to thank you for your leadership on this, your relentless leadership on protecting the environment, and for giving me this opportunity to participate in this special order this evening.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for the remarks that she made, and again she has made some points that I think are really crucial in terms of this whole debate relative to Earth Day.

I think that the Republican leadership consistently tries to pretend when we talk about the environment, that we are sort of the tree huggers. Not that there is anything wrong with hugging trees, but they forget the fact we are mainly talking about the public health and that when we talk about clean water, air and cleaning up hazardous waste sites, we are talking about direct health implications for the average person, for children, for mothers, whatever.

Also, I am glad the gentlewoman brought out, she certainly knows as a member of the Committee on Appropriations that we continue to operate under these stopgap funding measures which are still creating tremendous problems for the EPA and their ability to enforce the law to clean up Superfund sites, to do proper investigations. I am a little afraid that because we have not had the shutdowns that the Republicans brought us a few months ago, at that time people were vividly aware of the fact that the EPA was closed down, that Superfund sites were not being cleaned up, that there was not anybody out there going against the polluters or finding the polluters. But even though we do not have the Government shutdown or any agencies shut down now, the amount of money that is available for the EPA and other environment-related agencies is significantly cut back because of these stopgap measures.

I think this one we are under now extends to the 24th, sometime next week or so. We are just hoping if we get another continuing resolution or another appropriations bill it is going to be one that provides adequate funding for the EPA and these other agencies. Again, so far the Republican leadership has not indicated they are going to do that, so these agencies are being crippled in their ability to enforce the law and do the things important to us.

Ms. PELOSI. That is why I am so pleased President Clinton has stood firm on this issue, in addition to education and some other issues, Medicare, Medicaid, VA, that the President has stood firm and said that we cannot proceed unless we have the basic health and well-being of the American people protected in how we go forward.

I would like to elaborate on one point just for half a minute that I mentioned earlier, about a survey released last month in California by the California State Senate, refuting the claim that if you have environmental protection regulations you lose jobs.

This report looked at every major study by Government, universities, and private think tanks since 1973. Not a single reputable study found a negative impact from environmental laws. In fact, environmental regulations have created jobs, particularly in manufacturing, transportation, and utility industries, and as I mentioned, there are other industries like the fishing industry which are totally dependent upon a protected environment. There have been a boom in jobs in environmental technologies and services. The report says California, speaking for my State, California alone will have 200,000 environmental workers by the end of the year.

The environmental debate is really about protecting public health, as the gentleman has said. The jobs versus owls argument is dead.

Again, I thank you for allowing me this time.

Mr. PALLONE. You are absolutely right. In my district it is so vivid, your point, in the sense when we had these beach closings in the late eighties, billions of dollars literally were lost in tourism at the Jersey shore. There were no jobs at all in the summer. So I do not think I could find a better example. If we do not have clean water at the Jersey shore, we do not have an economy.

For the life of me, I do not understand why a lot of the Republicans or those in the leadership do not understand that. But a good environment means good jobs. So thank you again for participating.

I would like to yield now to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT].

Mr. DOGGETT. I thank you for yielding and for your leadership concerning environmental protection. I thought that one of the other really important aspects of this GINGRICH attack on the environment, this GINGRICH attempt to essentially have unilateral disarmament of the environmental law protection relates to the whole problem of clean water drinking standards. Where I come from, the city of Austin, TX, Colorado on the Rocks, with the Colorado River running through there, is considered to be a pretty good drink. I have begun to get a series of calls and letters from people throughout central Texas expressing concern that this Congress, and particularly this House, given its atrocious environmental

record during the last year, intends to weaken the safe drinking water standards.

Another concern that you may be familiar with, and the irony at a time when so many in this House have talked about more local responsibility, more community responsibility, is that they would come in and limit the community's right to know about dangerous substances in our water supply. I am wondering if the gentleman, in your leadership role with reference to the environment, is familiar with some of the dangers posed to our water supplies by the assault on the environment?

Mr. PALLONE. Let me say, first of all, when you talk about the Safe Drinking Water Act and the efforts to weaken those protections, it is a real problem. We are hearing now that because of the fact that the Republican leadership did some polling, they essentially found out that they were not doing too well with their constituents and possibly leading to next November's election, because they were perceived as anti-environment.

Mr. DOGGETT. That is reality. That demonstrates the ability of the American people to get past these stickers saying "I have been to the zoo" or "I planted a tree" or "I have a green sport coat," and get down to the fact that some people who say they are green at election time have been voting consistently to destroy the environment and to have an assault on environmental law enforcement.

□ 1845

Mr. PALLONE. Before we are finished with this special order tonight, maybe one of the things we could do is to bring up this memo that was sent out by the Republican leadership that essentially gets right to the point the gentleman is making about going out and hugging trees and going to zoos and all that to pretend that a Member is environmental.

Mr. DOGGETT. The gentleman is talking about the House Republican strategy for this year. That is where they got the public relations firm in to help them put a smiley face on their commitment to the environment by doing things like petting their dogs and that sort of thing?

Mr. PALLONE. I will read it directly. It will not take long. It is a pamphlet that was put out, I guess in October 1995, after the 9-month assault on the environment when they did the polling and found out that the public really did not like it, and it is amazing to me where they say, and I am just quoting, your constituents will give you more credit for showing up on a Saturday to help clean up the local park or beach than they will give a press release from someone in Washington talking about environmental issues. And they specifically say that you should go out and plant trees and go door to door and hand out tree samples, and then, last, become active in your local zoo. Go for

a visit, participate in fund-raising events, become active on the zoo citizens advisory board.

Now, do not get me wrong, I am all in favor of planting trees. I have done it myself. I go to the zoo all the time. I am a member of the zoo here in Washington and elsewhere. But the point is, this is just being used as a way to cover up a poor environmental record.

Mr. DOGGETT. A gimmick.

Mr. PALLONE. Exactly. Going back to the gentleman's point on the Safe Drinking Water Act, I am hearing that some in the leadership now are so concerned about their poor record on that statute that they have actually reached out to the Democrats and are talking about possibly coming up with some compromise legislation. But I will believe that when I see it.

Mr. DOGGETT. I am encouraged to hear that, though I read just this week in the April 15 issue of Congress Daily an announcement concerning a draft committee recommendation on clean water legislation, and it was an expression of great concern by the environmental working group that the committee draft, and this would be, of course, the Republican majority committee draft, would weaken community right-to-know provisions and allow new industry oriented peer review panels to veto EPA standards. That is that the people that pollute the water would be able to determine what pollution is and is not appropriate for our public law enforcement agencies to protect us against.

I would just point out that this is not, as this very cynical Republican strategy memo that the gentleman referred to, this is not just something coming from Washington. One of the people who wrote me within the last week is Pamela Garcia, who writes that Austin currently has the highest pure water standards in the State of Texas and I would like to see it stay that way. These high standards must be maintained to protect those most at risk from contamination.

I had a third grade teachers write, a woman who has committed her life to working with young people, to write to express concern about what she had heard about this same weakness in the community right-to-know provisions. Holly Long from Austin says that it may just be my imagination, but I thought the Government of our country is a place in the position that they are in to protect the rights of citizens that they represent. We should have the right to clean water and that right should be assured to us by the people that represent us.

I know the gentleman shares that view, that our job here is not to get on the side of whoever has the strongest lobby in Washington, but to stand up for people like Holly Long, who is out there trying to teach young people and bring them into the whole American dream; that we have a responsibility to ensure that she has an advocate here in Washington fighting for the right to be

able to see endangered species in someplace other than a zoo, and to not have all those trees clearcut in our old growth forests, and certainly to be able to be sure when they get a drink of water out of the Colorado River in Austin, TX, that it meets the standards that we would expect and that the gentleman would want in New Jersey.

Mr. PALLONE. I agree, and I really appreciate the fact because I do not think anybody else tonight brought up this sort of Republican strategy which we have seen with a lot of the efforts to weaken environmental laws, where provisions that I call sunshine law provisions, let the light in and right-to-know provisions, the ability of citizen groups to bring suit, the ability of the Federal Government to provide grants to citizen action or activists who are going to look into or investigate environmental problems where they live.

These kinds of protections that basically get the public more involved and sort of let in the light so that we know what is going on, those are the very things that in many of these bills that have come up that we have seen the Republican leadership try to weaken those protections.

Mr. DOGGETT. Empowering the local communities to address these issues. And, of course, I am so amazed at those who will come here on the floor of Congress and they will say, well, I am against pollution. I mean I am not in favor of pollution, I am just against the Environmental Protection Agency. Well, that is like saying I am not in favor of crime, I am just not in favor of the police.

It is the Environmental Protection Agency and some of our other protection authorities that are the law enforcement authorities with reference to the environment, just as our police and our highway patrolmen and highway troopers are the law enforcement for some of the other areas that affect our lives.

Just to give you another example, if I might. I am sure you have some of these from New Jersey, but another person who contracted me expressing concern about what this Congress is doing, particularly in the area of water quality, and I think again it really brings it home, it is not a battle between political parties or between Washington and Texas or New Jersey, but the fact that this affects the lives of real people who are struggling out there in America to make ends meet and who do not need the Congress getting in the way of their standard of living.

Susan Truesdale writes me:

Clean water is important to central Texans like me and my family. I can't imagine finding out 12 days after the fact that the water that my family and I had been drinking, bathing in, watering our pets and yards with, is contaminated with something that could possibly kill us or make us terminally ill. I don't want my kids drinking this stuff and not knowing. Vote to protect the right of Texans to be told immediately if our water is unsafe, for more protective standards not weaker ones.

And remember, she says, that many of our most vulnerable citizens are young people, are old people, people who have certain physical problems, certainly young women who are pregnant, who are most vulnerable to water that is polluted, to drinking water that does not meet clean water standards.

So I think, it is important that you have spent this time this evening bringing to the attention of our colleagues and to the American people how really far-reaching this very extremist agenda to undermine environmental law protection is, because I have found some people who are out there beginning to notice it and beginning to say, do not let this happen; that we have a responsibility to stand up and pose an obstacle to those who want to undermine environmental law enforcement.

Mr. PALLONE. I appreciate the gentleman's remarks, and maybe I could just briefly out sort the cynicism that I have seen around here on the part of the Republican leadership to the whole environmental issue.

I sort of started this evening by saying that when the Republican majority was elected in November 1994, they put forward a Contract With America, so to speak. There really was nothing in there that would stand out to anybody who was voting that would suggest that they were putting forth an anti-environmental agenda.

But when Speaker GINGRICH was elected and when the House organized the Republican majority, very quickly we saw an effort by the Republican leadership to bring to the floor what we call reauthorization bills, where we revisit various environmental laws, like the Clean Water Act, and use those reauthorization bills as vehicles to try to weaken directly environmental legislation, whether it was the Clean Water Act or the Superfund coming out of committee or some of the other bills that we rely on as sort of the whole basis for environmental protection here.

Mr. DOGGETT. This was after they began the weekly meetings with the polluters behind closed doors here in the Capitol?

Mr. PALLONE. Absolutely, and it was well documented that much of the legislation coming out of committee was actually written at those meetings with the polluters or with the special interests, and that they were even directing when they were coming to the floor.

They were not terribly successful in accomplishing that goal of weakening those statutes directly because of course the Democrats in the House battled them, and even when the bills passed the House, they had difficulty getting them through the Senate because the Senate was not as responsive to trying to weaken the environmental laws.

So very quickly, after that first 6 months of trying to go directly at environmental protection standards and

statutes, we saw the Republican leadership sort of regroup and look at the budget, if you will, and the appropriations bills as a vehicle to try to turn back the clock since Earth Day 1970. So we saw, as was mentioned by some of our colleagues here tonight, riders, legislative language, if you will, weakening language put into the budget.

We also saw, and most importantly, efforts to cut back on the amount of money that was appropriated for the agencies that protect the environment, like the EPA or the Department of the Interior, and even more so deep cuts in enforcement in those environmental cops on the beat, as you point out. Then, of course, by the end of 1995 we got to the point where we had these Government shutdowns, where those agencies were shut down and were not able to function at all.

I think at that point, and you and I recognize, I think, that at that point, at the end of 1995, Speaker GINGRICH and the Republican leadership started to do this polling which indicated to them that the public did not like what was going on with their anti-environmental crusade. That is when we got the memo saying go out and plant the trees and join your local zoo.

Mr. DOGGETT. My concern is that that is all they plan to do; that they want to have good public relations but that they intend to continue, as far as I know they have not stopped their closed-door meetings with the polluters and special interest lobbies that they have here every week; that they will have the smiley face out there but they will still be trying to sneak attack with the environmental riders and the slashing of the law enforcement budgets for those that are there to try to assure that we have the clean drinking water that people in central Texas want and the clean air that I know people across the country want.

Mr. PALLONE. Exactly. That is one of the main points that we are trying to make here tonight and that the gentleman is making very effectively, which is that we cannot be fooled, if you will, by the fact that we are not seeing legislation coming directly to the floor now to strike the Clean Water Act, for example. Because we are still having, with these stopgap funding measures, significant cuts in enforcement, in the ability for environmental agencies to actually operate and to enforce the law.

That is continuing on a regular basis, and all efforts to try to sort of paper that over by suggesting that we are going to be a little better on the environment now is really nothing but smoke and mirrors.

Mr. DOGGETT. Or we could expect the same type of thing that we saw last year when there was a bill out here that was called the Clean Water Act amendments, but most everyone that looked at it referred to it as the dirty water act. Most of the commentators who studied it noted that it was not surprising that it was a dirty water

measure that actually weakened, in the name of clean water, the existing law, because it had been written behind closed doors by the various polluters who had a vested interest in this matter.

Mr. PALLONE. Exactly. And the fact of the matter is a lot of the provisions in that dirty water bill are still attached as riders to these appropriations, as well as some of these stopgap spending bills that continue to come up, so they are not going away. They are still there, but now they are sort of hidden a little more.

I think it is incumbent upon us, as Democrats, and whether Democrat or Republican Members of this body who feel that the environment needs to be protected, in celebration, if you will, of Earth Day, that we continue to be vigilant and make the point that this Congress has been terrible, has been the worst Congress on record with regard to environmental protection. We have to bring to the light and to the public the fact of how they are going about this, and how the Republican leadership continues with this antienvironmental agenda.

So I want to thank the gentleman again for being here tonight, and I know we are going to continue to make this point leading up to Earth Day next Monday and beyond.

Mr. DELLUMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to focus our attention on the upcoming Earth Day commemoration. Earth Day is a day we should all pause and consider where we are, where we have been, and where we are going. Earth is our home; we have no other. If we exhaust her resources; if we pollute her water, air, and land, there is no other place we can go. Rachel Carson first apprised us of the danger to our environment in "The Silent Spring" in 1962. Consciousness about the overharvest of renewable resources, endangered species, and pollution resulted in efforts on the local, state, national, and international levels to address these issues. Acting in the best interest of all the people and in the long term, Congress passed a number of laws that significantly improved the living environment of all Americans and helped to heal the damage done out of ignorance and greed the previous decades.

The Clean Water Act was passed in 1972. It protects surface and ground water. It provides water quality standards to control industrial and municipal pollution. It also provides federal grants to help states modernize public sewage treatment plants and reduce sewage discharges. As a result of this act, millions of pounds of industrial pollutants have been eliminated from our drinking water and from our rivers and lakes. Although the nation's waters are cleaner than they've been for decades, 40 percent of the Nation's waters are still not clean enough for fishing and swimming. Thus, we still need to maintain a strong Clean Water Act.

However, the Republican majority wants to substantially weaken the Clean Water Act. They want to exempt 70,000 chemicals from the act, allowing industries to pollute the Nation's waters as much as they like without any hindrance. They want to slough off the costs of their industrial production onto the American

people. The big industries want the American people to pay for industrial pollution, and we will pay—with environmental losses. Fish will be poisoned, rivers and lakes will die, and we will be unable to swim and fish. The Republican majority wants to reduce funding for cleanup projects, which may reduce taxes in the short-term, but it will raise them later, because if we don't clean up the mess now, our grandchildren will have to do it.

The Safe Drinking Water Act has also been the focus of Republican attacks. The Republican majority killed Safe Drinking Water Legislation in 1994, and has made significant cuts in funding the safe drinking water infrastructure. Currently, a weaker bill—the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1995—is being considered. Without a strong Safe Drinking Water Act, we will pay with our health, from the potential negative effect of ingesting chemicals over the long term.

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act [CERCLA] Superfund was created in 1980. Its purpose is to clean up the most polluted hazardous waste sites. It requires polluters to pay 75 percent of the costs of cleaning up the sites they pollute. The Federal Government pays the balance of the costs. Of the 1,400 sites identified for cleanup, only 349 have been completed. Because of the lack of commitment to cleanup by previous administrations, 60 percent of these sites have been cleaned up during the Clinton administration alone.

The CERCLA Superfund needs to be made more effective and efficient, not less. The Republican majority wants to change CERCLA to provide fewer cleanups. Instead of cleaning up hazardous waste sites, they want to merely contain them. They also want to shift more of the cost from the polluters to the government, making government—the taxpayers—pay 50 percent of the cost instead of 25 percent. The Republican majority has also halted designation of new sites and reduced the amount appropriated for cleanups.

The Republican majority has also been giving away America's natural resources to special interests. In years past, Congress created the National Park system, wildlife refuges, and National Forests. In 1995, the National Park system alone enabled 270 million people to commune with Nature. The National Park system includes National Parks, seashores, preserves, scenic riverways and trails. While these areas are in need of maintenance, the Republican majority has cut its operating funds.

In addition, the Republican majority wants to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to drilling for oil and natural gas without important environmental safeguards. ANWR is home to a wide variety of animals and plants, which will be negatively affected by drilling. They are also attempting to open up over 20 million acres of America's Redrock Wilderness to development.

The Republican majority wants to open up national forests to logging above the levels that are sustainable over the long term. They want to allow logging in old growth forests, the home of many endangered species of animals, birds, and plants. In the guise of salvage logging of dead and dying trees, they have passed legislation that opens up logging in these ancient forests, without compliance with environmental laws. The Republican majority

is even proposing to dissolve the Tongass National Forest (America's largest rainforest), transfer ownership to the State of Alaska, and open it up to logging and other development. Thus, the heritage of all Americans is being sold to oil and timber companies, who don't care about the long-term health of the forests or the animals, birds, and plants that are dependent on them for their survival.

The Republican majority has also been attempting to gut the Endangered Species Act. Masquerading as reform, the bill was drafted by timber, mining, ranching and utility interests who would prefer to do business without regard to the harm it causes to endangered species and their habitat.

The Republican majority has resisted reform of the Mining Law of 1872, which allows mining companies to take minerals from federal lands without paying royalties for them. Companies need only pay \$2.50 to \$5.00 per acre to carry off all the minerals they can extract. These are nonrenewable resources that are literally being given away to mining companies. The American people has a right to a reasonable return for their common property. But the Republican majority is resisting this needed mining reform.

The Republican majority has done all they can to cripple federal environmental laws. In addition to weakening individual environmental laws, they are attempting to undermine the enforcement of environmental laws by drastically cutting the budget of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and by limiting the authority the EPA has to implement and enforce those laws.

In the guise of "regulatory reform" the Republican majority is attempting to undermine the environmental laws passed during the past 25 years. Calling environmental safeguards "red tape," they are trying to trick the American people into allowing big businesses: to pollute America's water, air, and land; to pay less than full value for America's timber and minerals; and to destroy America's wilderness and wildlife. In true Orwellian fashion, the Republican majority is trying to steal the common heritage of the American people, obfuscating it with anti-government rhetoric.

Earth Day is an excellent time for all of us to take the time to consider what kind of home we want to live in, and what kind of home we want to leave for our grandchildren. Will there be clean water, air, and land? Or will they be polluted, ugly, and toxic? Will we have any forests left? Will there be any wilderness and wild animals left? Clean water, air, and land is the birthright of all Americans. Forests, wilderness, and wild animals are our heritage too. Will our grandchildren curse us because we wasted their inheritance?

□ 1900

REFORM INITIATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. METCALF). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I come to speak to my colleagues tonight here in the House to discuss some of the reforms that we have achieved thus far and where we need to