

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INSLEE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EARTH DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here this evening on the 34th anniversary of Earth Day. Now, the pollsters tell us that the environment may not be the very first thing that springs to people's minds when asked about the most important issues of the day, but we find that when you probe just a little bit, it is clear that that really does not give the whole picture, because the environment is more than just an issue, it is an umbrella, it is an overview, it is a prism through which Americans see the things that touch their lives most intimately.

When you get those Americans starting to talk about what matters to them most, we hear things like clean air and clean water, a secure energy future, a quality of life for their families. In dealing with the children, one in four admissions, we know in urban areas, are for children with respiratory problems to emergency rooms. When you start Americans down that path, they do not stop talking about it.

If we look at the hundreds of millions of dollars that State and local communities have voted to increase their money spent on water quality and open space, in community after community we see demonstrated concern and action at the local level.

One of the things that characterized the first Earth Day and the activities that followed it was a bipartisan spirit of commitment to improving environmental quality overall and in very specific terms in communities across the country.

I am proud to spring from an Oregon tradition that was decidedly bipartisan and environmental. My first governmental position was an appointment by then-Governor Tom McCall, a legendary Republican in our State, to the Livable Oregon Committee. I was privileged to serve in the Oregon Legislature a third of a century ago when we enacted the first comprehensive land use planning legislation of any State in the Union, and it was the product of bipartisan leadership and concern. On the Federal level, the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act were enacted during Republican administrations with bipartisan leadership.

Unfortunately for our success in protecting the environment, on this Earth Day we are seeing that the bipartisan tradition of environmental leadership

is being abandoned for short-term political advantage catering to powerful special interests. We can take, for example, the sad saga of President Bush's efforts to weaken the Clean Air Act, documented in a fascinating article in The New York Times Magazine 3 weeks ago.

But it is something that Members of this Congress are familiar with, as we have struggled with this administration under the New Source Review Program, which was requiring old power plants to install pollution controls. Instead, this administration has radically transformed the Nation's Clean Air Act quietly, trying to do it under the radar screen by way of regulatory changes and bureaucratic detectives. And now, older polluting power plants that should have been cleaned up decades ago have been given essentially a free pass, allowed to continue to spew forth harmful pollution and global-warming gases into the air.

Mr. Speaker, it is frustrating to the extreme to see what is happening in terms of global climate change. The administration has been challenged just 2 weeks ago by the Union of Concerned Scientists, a group of 60 scientists, including 20 Nobel laureates, who are concerned about how this administration is turning science on its head, shifting, changing, and obscuring, when, in fact, the role of science should be one that is a constructive one to help us promote environmental protection.

We are seeing at this point the situation where these environmental threats are increasing on the global scale, in terms of global climate change, global warming. We have a generation of Americans today who may be the first generation where there will be no glaciers in Glacier Park, and who may witness the eradication of polar bears in their natural habitat.

But it is not an obscure activity that is going to occur in remote reaches of wilderness or in the Arctic netherland. No American is immune to the deadly consequences of the actions of the last 100 years of assaulting our environment and our government's inaction in some of the simplest common-sense steps.

□ 1730

No one in America will be immune from global warming. It is not just the disappearance of permafrost in areas of the Arctic tundra, the buckling of roads and the erosion of coastline we are seeing in our 49th State, it is the increasing temperatures, rising ocean levels, extreme weather events, and storm surges in coastal areas put all Americans at risk.

We are a rich country, and much of our territory is in temperate areas. Imagine what will happen in poor countries around the world already prone to drought, or to tens of millions of poor people in Bangladesh that will be threatened with drowning by rising sea levels and storm surges.

But there is good news for us to consider on this Earth Day, and a growing consensus of Americans across the country, contrary to the approaches of this administration. They want us to take simple, common-sense steps today to clean up the air, slow global warming and protect our public lands. One simple step is simply to keep in place the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act and other landmark legislation. We have hundreds of Federal rules, regulations and efforts at rollback that demonstrate that we are actually having initiatives by the leadership in this Congress and by the administration for environmental activities that, rather than making the air cleaner, the water more pure, will actually put us at risk.

Today we need to stick to some of the fundamental underlying environmental legislation we have got. It will be a cleaner America, a healthier environment than if we were to follow some of the so-called reforms of this administration.

Another critical step is to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. The reality is now that our best estimates are that U.S. production of oil is going to peak in 2008, and there will be a decline of 18 percent over 20 years. It is not happening because of environmental protections, it is because we simply do not have enough oil. However, according to the Energy Information Agency, we are going to be skyrocketing in terms of demand, over 40 percent in the next 20 years, which will increase our demand on foreign oil. Under the current situation, placing our reliance on unstable areas is simply not a good strategic undertaking.

I am pleased that the likely standard-bearer for our party, Senator JOHN KERRY, has put on the table a wide range of environmental initiatives, including fuel efficiency for automobiles, one that could be good for the American consumer, for the environment, and indeed for our auto industry.

Right now there are three alternatives for the American consumers who want hybrid vehicles, but they are, sadly, all Japanese. General Motors has announced it is bringing pickups on the market that will improve gas mileage, but that is the tip of the iceberg. There is far more we can do.

I am pleased that I have been joined by a number of colleagues here who have ideas to lend to this discussion this afternoon, but I want to just put on the table the notion that the most important thing the Federal Government can do for new initiatives is to model the behavior it expects of other Americans. If the Federal Government would simply clean up after itself, establish high standards for the hundreds of millions of square feet it has in offices, the tens of millions of acres that it manages, its vast enterprises, it could have a transformational effect. There are opportunities to discuss this further, but I want to turn to some of my colleagues that are here.

I note I have been joined by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), who is charged with one of the most difficult tasks in Congress, and that is providing a representation for the people in the District of Columbia, who, although they are taxed, although they are under the control of the Federal Government more than citizens of any State in the Union, they have not been graced with the opportunity of a voting Member of Congress. I must say it is astounding the work that the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) does in terms of providing leadership on a wide variety of areas, and not the least of which has to do with the environment.

I have visited with the gentlewoman in areas around American University where we are still struggling 85 years after World War I with the consequence of failing to clean up after ourselves with the chemical weapons that were tested inside the District of Columbia. The gentlewoman is fighting for a wide variety of interests.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) to discuss the impacts that she is facing in the District of Columbia and some of the noteworthy efforts she is leading.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for his many interests here, in his district, and throughout the Nation. The fact is that people in the District are living with the aftermath of munitions that were buried after World War I, which is not very pleasant, particularly when they pay some of the highest taxes in the United States. I agree with the gentleman that if the Federal Government would simply set an example by cleaning up after itself, more of the rest of America would be likely to follow.

One example I have been able to get into a recent bill which has passed the House is for the Federal Government to use solar energy in its own buildings. There is \$60 million for 5 years for that to occur.

I also see that the gentleman from Oregon has a bike pin in his lapel, and I must state what a wonderful steward of the environment the gentleman has been, how much his leadership is appreciated there, not only with his signature issue, livability, but the gentleman's across-the-board leadership on environmental issues. It stands to reason that the gentleman from Oregon would be leading this Special Order today.

This is Earth Day, and we come to the floor today, as many of us do on many other occasions. It may be Earth Day, but part of talking about the Earth is talking about water, so I want to talk about the Safe Drinking Act and the Clean Water Act at a time when Members may be imbibing lead as they drink the water at their workplace, the Congress of the United States. The water that we drink, and

we are served water where we eat, when we go into committee, there is always water there, and we drink some of that, that water comes right out of the faucet, and we have to think about what that means. If it were only a District of Columbia matter, I would not be raising it on Earth Day, but the Safe Drinking Water Act is being violated all across the United States. I want to alert Members on this Earth Day to what it seems to me each of us should be doing to ensure that we have safe drinking water.

One of the great dividing lines between developing and advanced societies is safe drinking water. When you come to the District of Columbia, you should not have to ask: Is the water safe to drink here? I suggest anyone who comes in fact asks that question, and that is a question that needs to be asked in your own jurisdiction as well when you consider what has happened to the District of Columbia and what it has exposed about safe drinking water.

I am not sure what side our country is on when it comes to the dividing line between countries with safe drinking water and countries without, but it was surely a wake-up call when we learned that there was lead in the water of the Nation's Capital.

The reason this is a matter of national concern is because two Federal agencies control the water here. The Environmental Protection Agency does the same for the District of Columbia as it does for the Nation. If we want to talk about stewards of the environment, the Environmental Protection Agency would not be included there. Of course, it does double duty here since it acts as our State EPA as well as the watchdog Federal EPA.

It gets worse. The water here is purified by the Washington Aqueduct. That is run by the Corps of Engineers, and that is because they built it more than 100 years ago. We have learned that the Environmental Protection Agency signed off on public notice that there was lead in the water a year after it was found, and so buried so nobody knew about it or could have discovered it. Can Members imagine how many pregnant women and small children at developmental ages have been drinking that water without knowing it? That is the kind of environmental crime that the Safe Drinking Water Act was passed to avoid.

The EPA signed off on the public notice, or I should say the lack of public notice; but the problems are more fundamental. The problems are with the very basics themselves. All of the regulations that the EPA has us living under, any good on this Earth Day we should ask ourselves, and does the EPA enforce them? On the basic science, we do not know how much lead is harmful or not. Why are we this long in finding out? We know how much is harmful for young children, but public health officials tell us that lead is harmful for people as old as you and me, Mr. Speaker, but we do not know what the

amount is, and nobody has funded the science to find out.

When it comes to enforcement, what the Environmental Protection Agency tells us is they should test for lead, and if they find lead, they keep testing. So what they do is they keep testing until they dilute the findings, and then they do not have to clean up the water at all. This is a public health catastrophe. Every jurisdiction is supposed to be doing this. WASA kept testing, hoping to dilute the results it found so as not to have to remove lead pipes. It backfired on WASA because it found more, not less, lead.

We are living with bad science, wrong assumptions. Even in the 19th century when the service pipes in the District of Columbia were built with lead, there was an outcry that it was unsafe to use lead service lines. That is more than 100 years ago. They knew that. That is what we have today.

So we are told when you do find that there is lead in the water, you have to do partial replacement; that is to say replacement of the lead service lines in the public part of the area. We learned in hearings if you do this partial replacement, and the line on private property is left there, it can be worse because apparently the partial replacement acts as a battery to whatever remaining lead is there, and the problem worsens.

They switched chemicals from chlorine to chloramine. We think that may have caused the corroding of lead into the water. Now, when we see problems like that, the people who purify the water may have made it worse by switching chemicals because they did not do the right tests, and the Environmental Protection Agency does not begin to know how much lead is bad or good and lets you keep testing until you do not have to, in fact, remove lead lines at all. I suggest that on this Earth Day we go back to basics when it comes to safe drinking water and start all over again and rebuild the regulatory basis of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Finally, let me say the Clean Water Act is another great achievement of this Congress. More than 30 years ago we cleaned up the Potomac, but there is another river that lies within 2,000 yards of the Capitol dome, the Anacostia River, which is utterly polluted. Some of that pollution comes from the fact that there was a naval gun factory; but today, more of it comes from underground sewage and storm water conveyance systems that are over 100 years old. I am trying to have that fixed. It will cost \$1 billion, but if we get \$100 million every year, we will clean up the Anacostia River, we will do a lot for the Chesapeake Bay, and do a lot for the drinking water here in this area.

I am very pleased to name the cosponsors of this bill in this region. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. WYNN), the gentleman from Maryland

(Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), and others from this region are coming on, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH), for example. Virtually all of the Senators from this region are on this bill. It is time we stepped up and did for the Anacostia River what we did for the Potomac River 30 years ago.

□ 1745

I appreciate the time the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) has given me to discuss water on this Earth Day, for it reminds us that Earth Day is about the entire environment. And when we say the Earth, we mean the Earth, we mean the water, and we mean the air. I thank him very much for his leadership once again.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for her comments and for her leadership. I hope that I will see the time here in Congress where the Anacostia becomes a model for the country in the backyard of Congress about how to do it right after, as she says, decades of abuse.

I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA), who has been one of the most forceful voices in his short time in Congress for speaking out for the preservation of the environment, somebody who is deeply concerned and has focused in on what is happening with the rollbacks and somebody who comes from a State that is facing some of the most unique environmental challenges that he has been a leader in long before he came to Congress.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for yielding. I appreciate the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today on this Earth Day to comment that while our Nation is distracted by war and terrorism, the Bush administration has systematically and methodically been dismantling our most fundamental public health laws such as the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act; but the people of America and in my community, in addition to wanting peace and security in the world, also want a clean and healthy environment for themselves and for their children to live in.

On this Earth Day we state clearly, and I want to repeat, we state clearly that Americans want and deserve clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, and natural places to experience. We want our most special lands like our national parks to be cared for so they can be enjoyed by future generations as we do today.

But the test results are in, and it is official. The George W. Bush Presidency is the worst environmental Presidency in the history of this country. From our urban areas to our national forests, the Bush administration is sacrificing our health, our environment for the benefit of corporations. Communities of color continue to suffer disproportionately from Bush's policy to lower air and water quality stand-

ards and to gut funding for Super Fund cleanup programs, which impact communities across this country.

Our constituents are eating mercury-tainted fish, drinking lead-tainted water, living near toxic contamination sites. Our national parks are deteriorating. Our national forests and public lands are being opened up for polluting uses like oil and gas development, mining, and logging. Meanwhile, the administration disputes that global warming exists and refuses to take steps to address this growing and imminent threat.

This administration is, to say the least, industry-friendly. But we also want one that is Earth friendly. We do not have to sacrifice our economic future for a healthy environment. We can have both a healthy economy and a healthy environment.

We Democrats in Congress are fighting for our environment. My colleagues have fought to keep oil drilling out of the Arctic, to ensure that polluters clean up their messes, to prevent our forests from being clear cut for profit, to keep our air and water clean. We have called for comprehensive and sensible energy policy that does not reward the polluting industries with massive subsidies, but enhances opportunities for renewable energy sources.

As we reflect on the Earth's environment on Earth Day, let us not forget that we have only one Earth to live on. Let us keep our environment and our families healthy by fighting for the protection of our air, water, and land. America's environmental laws have succeeded in improving people's health and lives. Let us continue that legacy by protecting what we have gained and enhancing what we still need to gain.

On this Earth Day, at stake for all Americans is the very essence of what makes us unique as a country and as a people: our land, our people, and our public places. At stake is our public health. At stake is the protection of our natural resources. At stake is a legacy that we all share in, a shared legacy and responsibility about protecting our environment and protecting the health of our people.

The record of the Bush administration on rollbacks of protections and giveaways to special interests is a destruction of that very essence and that legacy. I think the people of America deserve much more. They deserve a country that values its people, protects its environment, and assures that we protect the very essence of what makes us different as a country.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) for his statement, and I appreciate his eloquence in terms of looking at the big picture and the impacts that people are facing.

The gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), his fellow Southwestern colleague, has himself a rich family tradition dealing with these issues and continues that on the Committee on Resources today and being a vigilant

spokesperson on a wide range of environmental issues.

I yield to the gentleman from New Mexico if he has some comments to share with us this evening.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Oregon for yielding, and I thank him for leading this Special Order. I would like to say that his leadership in this Congress has been exceptional when it comes not only to sustainable communities and making sure we build up the quality of life in our communities but it is also, as we see by the bicycle on his lapel, a good solid balanced approach to transportation and transportation systems and realizing that bicycles and modes of transportation other than automobile traffic are very important to our communities. I thank him for that and thank him for his leadership.

In hopes of keeping our public lands as beautiful and as productive as possible, I would like to offer a few thoughts concerning recent changes to our National Forest Management policies. National Forest Management plans were first conceived by Gifford Pinchot, the first United States chief of the Forest Service. He was a Republican like the President at the time, Teddy Roosevelt, who thought that we should organize the country's forests into a National Forest System that we now know today as our vast system of national forests.

Pinchot was initially led by the utilitarian philosophy as of "the greatest good for the greatest number." In guiding the management of the national forests, he later appended to that statement "in the long run": "The greatest good for the greatest number in the long run." Because he recognized that forest management consists of long-term decisions in protecting the resources.

By the end of 1910, at the end of Pinchot's term, there were 150 national forests covering 170 million acres of land. And he wrote about the U.S. Forest Service and what he was trying to do, and he said "not a single acre of the government, State, or private timberland was under systematic forest management anywhere on this most richly timbered of all continents . . . When the Gay Nineties began, the common word for our forests was 'inexhaustible.' To waste timber was a virtue, not a crime. There would always be plenty of timber . . . The lumbermen . . . regarded forest devastation as normal and second growth as the delusion of fools . . . And as for sustained yield, no such idea had ever entered their heads."

He went on to say: "Without natural resources," and this was when he was really talking about his idea of conservation and good stewardship, "life itself is impossible. From birth to death, natural resources, transformed for human use, feed, clothe, shelter, and transport us. Upon them we depend for every material necessity, comfort,

convenience, and protection in our lives. Without abundant resources prosperity is out of reach."

Such was the philosophy that guided the management of our national forests at the beginning of the 20th century.

The beginning of the 21st century is a far different story altogether. Republicans are still in control, but they have abandoned bipartisanship, wise stewardship. Under the warm and fuzzy name "The Healthy Forests Initiative," the Bush administration is proposing an agenda that includes sweeping changes to the management of our National Forests, cutting people out of the process of participating and commenting on forest plans. The first assault came only weeks after the Bush administration took office when they chose to put on hold all the proposed regulations that had been developed by the previous administration. Those regulations were the results of years of efforts by an independent committee of scientists. Those new regulations were science- and ecosystem-based. They reflected the state-of-the-art knowledge concerning the management of natural resources.

One of the first things President Bush's new Assistant Secretary for Forests, Mark Rey, did was scrap all of these science-based, commonsense regulations. And in place of the science-based regulations encouraging conservation and protections, the new administration proposed regulations that reflect a wish list of the timber industry. Instead of "the greatest good for the greatest number in the long run," the philosophy of this administration appears to be "the greatest good for the special interests in the quickest time," using our forests for a few wealthy individuals.

We have been expecting these new regulations for a while, but now it seems the administration might be holding back, afraid to show their cards in an election year. They know the American people will not stand for a President who time and again sells off our public lands, our public trust, to the highest bidder.

The administration has succeeded in passing a law, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, which has begun to codify some of their plans to sell, no, let me make that give away, our National Forests to the timber industry.

Other sections of the act give timber companies the right to log big trees from the backcountry. Taxpayer dollars are going to be used to build roads that will take these timber industries into the backcountry, to take trees that pose no fire risk to people, all under the umbrella of this reckless piece of legislation.

Healthy forests under this administration means healthy bank accounts for a fortunate few and barren hillsides for Americans and for the plants and animals and human beings that depend on truly healthy forests.

On Earth Day we would do ourselves the biggest favor by looking back 100

years and remembering the guiding philosophy of our country's first forester, "the greatest good for the greatest number in the long run."

And I would suggest that Gifford Pinchot, our first forester, and Teddy Roosevelt would say to the Republicans, Why have you abandoned the time-tested bipartisan solutions?

And with that I say once again to the gentleman from Oregon that he has been a great leader on these environmental issues, and I hope that we can continue to carry on these discussions and let the American people know that there are very important issues at stake on this Earth Day.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his statement. We were just last night at the National Parks Conservation Association awards dinner, and we were reminded how these issues do not have partisan boundaries that are required, that it unites us as a country, that it spoke to opportunities that were different, hearkening back to the context that he offered up.

I am hopeful that we can embrace the spirit of the history that he has given us that will help guide and inform some of our decisions here, and I appreciate his leadership in trying to make that happen.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate, as we are referring to some history, we are joined by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND), someone I have been privileged to work with on issues dealing with water resources, the reform of some of the opportunities for the Corps of Engineers and how Congress works with the Corps of Engineers; and I note not only is he a leader in issues that deal with environment and uniting sports people of varied interests of his State but I think appropriate the legacy of that marvelous State of Wisconsin, and 34 years ago it was Senator Gaylord Nelson who helped launch us on this path.

□ 1800

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman for observations he might make that will help us focus on what we are celebrating here today.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from Oregon for, first of all, taking time this evening for this Special Order to commemorate the 34th anniversary of Earth Day, and for the leadership he has shown on a variety of conservation and environmental measures that we have a chance to work on in the United States Congress.

But I want to take a moment to pay a special tribute and give special thanks to a terrific statesman, a former Governor and former United States Senator from the great State of Wisconsin, the father of Earth Day, Senator Gaylord Nelson.

It was his vision that led to the first Earth Day in our country over 34 years ago. During his maiden speech in the

United States Senate, he came out with 11 specific proposals on policy changes that we needed to pursue as a Nation in order to enhance the protection and the quality of our environment and our natural resources.

He was one of the first public officials that recognized that economic growth and development could go hand in hand with the protection of our natural resources and the protection of our environment; that they did not have to be mutually exclusive.

But he also recognized that public opinion was way ahead of public officials in this area; that it was the policymakers that needed to catch up with where the American people were; and recognizing the value of doing a better job, of being the stewards of our lands and our water and our air that we breathe, the environment in which we raise our children; and it is to him we owe a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid.

This is a person who today if you talked to him, and he is still very active in the environmental field, working at the Wilderness Society here in Washington, delivering countless speeches every year, traveling extensively throughout the United States and parts of the world, who would probably be a little surprised to realize that last year, during the 33rd anniversary of Earth Day, there were hundreds of millions of people in over 180 countries all joining together to celebrate Earth Day, something that he gave birth to.

He is also someone that recognizes that there is still so much more work that needs to be done. He has been invaluable to me personally with the conversations that I have had, the privilege of going to him for advice, whether it is on work and how better to preserve and protect the Mississippi River Basin, what we can do to guard against the global warming phenomena, which generations, unfortunately, will have to wrestle with today, and the unfinished business he left when he left the United States Senate many years ago, which is our calling today.

There was a very good biography written about Senator Gaylord Nelson by a very talented former journalist and writer in Wisconsin, Bill Christopherson, entitled *The Man From Clear Lake*. That is the small town in which Gaylord Nelson was born and raised in. It is in northwestern Wisconsin, and it is small-town America. It is not too far from my wife's small town of Cumberland, where she was born and raised.

But Gaylord Nelson is living testimony to the idea that one person with a great idea can have a profound change in the direction of our Nation and of the world. It was that idea of what we needed to do in working together, those of us in decision-making positions, but also all of us as citizens of this planet of ours, what we can do working together to better preserve and protect the natural resources so we

leave a better legacy for our children to inherit.

I come from a State with a very proud legacy of giants, like Gaylord Nelson, like Bill Proxmire, like Fighting Bob LaFollette, that gave birth to the progressive tradition in this country. But there is no one who I have idolized with greater esteem or have greater admiration for than that man from the small town of Clear Lake, Wisconsin, Gaylord Nelson, and the idea that he gave the Nation and the world 34 years ago today in envisioning the need for Earth Day celebrations, and the constant reminder to us that there is so much that we need to do to protect our environment, especially during challenging days like today when, unfortunately, there is an administration in power that seems quick to roll back much of the progress and much of the achievement that has been made over the last few decades, rolling back provisions of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts; releasing those 5 p.m. press releases from the Environmental Protection Agency on Friday afternoons when they think no one is paying attention or when people are starting their weekends or going to their Friday night dinners or whatever.

But it is up to us to shed light on what is taking place, and it is up to us to try to foster the bipartisan atmosphere in which we have to work in order to make great strides in this area.

So, again, I thank my colleague from Oregon for yielding me some time on this very special day and for the opportunity to pay tribute to a very special American, a great citizen, former Senator Gaylord Nelson.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. We appreciate your hard work and leadership in putting this spotlight on Senator Nelson.

We have been joined by the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN), who I note, no small note of irony, the President was celebrating Earth Day at a location that the gentleman and I have visited in the past in Wells, Maine, as we have been doing work environmentally. I did not know if the gentleman had any thoughts or observations based on that experience today in his district.

I would be pleased to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership. It is true, the President is today visiting the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve up at the Laudholm Farms. The gentleman and I went there 2 years ago. We also went up a mountain nearby that is part of a project that people are trying to save some land.

Though we appreciate the President coming to Maine on Earth Day, it really cannot hide the fact that his record on the environment is one of probably the worst records of any President in my lifetime.

Let me give a few examples. He went today to the Wells National Estuarine

Research Reserve. It is very clear when you look at the budget that the President has proposed, in light of the need for more research funds for marine-related research, he came because his budget proposes to increase funding for this tiny \$16 million National Estuarine Research System by 3 percent. That is a 3 percent increase. So, this small program gets a reasonable increase, but it is the exception.

The reserve system is an important part of NOAA's Ocean and Coastal Management Program, which President Bush proposes to cut by 20 percent. The National Ocean Service is cut a whopping 35 percent. NOAA itself receives an overall 8 percent reduction.

The President proposes to reduce the budget of the EPA, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Forest Service. He proposes to seriously underfund the National Park Service. He proposes to slash the Land and Water Conservation Fund that purchases Federal land for facilities like the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. As a result of Land and Water Conservation Fund cuts, the Fish and Wildlife Service received only \$10 million this year for lands nationwide.

Maine, on the other hand, is investing more, renewing its commitment to bond funding for what we call the Land for Maine's Future Program.

A couple of other points. Mercury contamination is now a huge issue in this country. The EPA recently announced that twice the number of infants are born with high levels of mercury in their blood than they thought before. Now, 600,000 infants are born each year. The Maine Bureau of Health has a warning, and it reads as follows: "Pregnant and nursing women, women who may get pregnant, and children under 8 should not eat any freshwater fish from Maine's inland waters."

We have gone about the process of restricting emissions from our waste incinerators, and yet coal-fired power plants from across the country still emit 48 tons of mercury every year. It gets up in the air, it runs with the wind west to east, it comes down in the rain, it pollutes our waterways, it gets into our fish and is consumed by human beings.

But what is the President's record on mercury? He has delayed full mercury regulation from 2008 to 2030, submitting another generation of Maine children and children around the country to fish they cannot safely consume. We believe that what he has done is illegal under the Clean Air Act.

Really, Maine has taken the opposite approach, trying to regulate everything we can with respect to the mercury emissions that are within our control. It is just another contrast.

I happen to feel he came to Maine because Maine has a record as an environmentally-conscious State. But it takes more than a visit to my State to make you an environmentalist.

I will mention two other things quickly. Ozone pollution, Wells, Maine,

where the President visited today has just been found to be out of compliance with the 8-hour ozone health-based standards under the Clean Air Act. Let me tell you, Wells, Maine, is not polluting the air. There is not enough manufacturing activity going on in Wells to pollute Wells or any surrounding communities. This is pollution that comes to our State from outside.

The President's action in this regard with respect to ozone pollution has been to undermine the New Source Review court cases filed by the Clinton administration that would have led to the most significant reduction in air pollution in recent memory, and he has issued new New Source Review rules that allow the dirtiest power plants in the country to continue to pollute, even when they expand their capacity to produce electricity.

I have always said he has what he calls his Clear Skies legislation, and if I have ever heard of legislation that is a triumph of marketing over substance, it is Clear Skies, because it does not clear the skies, it clouds them. It would not be as effective as the enforcement of existing law.

Finally, climate change. Here is an issue, the President made a promise in the campaign. He walked away from it right after he was elected. In Wells, Maine, this estuarine area, this is the kind of area that is at risk from climate change and rising seas. It seems to me once again the rest of the world is concerned about this issue. The science is clear. The President denies the science and simply refuses to deal with one of the growing and potentially horrendous environmental challenges that lie in front of us.

There is a better way. We can work together based on sound science with a commitment to improving the quality of our air and water for ourselves and our children for years to come. This administration will not do that, but I know others will.

I thank the gentleman for giving me this time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's illustrations. We were on this floor earlier this week talking about the long-term budget implications which will guarantee that these unfortunate, ill-advised and unacceptable cuts are the tip of the iceberg, and we are going to be looking at that for years to come unless we change the priorities of the administration or unless we change the administration.

We are reaching a conclusion here. We have three more of my colleagues. I think we have at least 4 minutes each for them. I will not take more of my time.

But I would turn, if I could, to my friend from California (Mr. FARR), who is here not just on Earth Day, but this week as a spokesman and a champion for ocean health and environment. It is a great juxtaposition, and I am happy to yield time for him to make some comments that would be appropriate.

Mr. FARR. Thank you very much, my distinguished colleague from Portland, Oregon. I think but for your personal involvement in changing a city, we would not see the cities of America be as beautiful as Portland, Oregon, one of the most beautiful places to live now, and certainly the transportation system that the gentleman created there is the model for the country.

I am proud to be here on this 34th anniversary of Earth Day with all my colleagues. As I heard the people before me, I could not help but think that some of my colleagues will someday be future U.S. Senators, Governors and members of the Cabinet. With what they have said, it is obvious that their hearts and minds are in the right place.

I have a long statement, and I will submit it for the RECORD. I just wanted to say that today we launched, and this week, essentially a focus on how we should upgrade the oceans in America. We have ignored them. We paid attention to clean air, clean water, and we have 10 different agencies, departments in the Federal Government, hundreds of laws, and the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing.

We have had a private sector report by the Pew Commission, a public sector report that we in Congress authorized, the U.S. Oceans Commission. They made the report back to Congress on Tuesday of this week. Now it is our responsibility, the legislative branch of government, to come up with a new organization, new laws, that will essentially focus on the ocean. In essence, to put it in perspective, more than 1,500 people have successfully climbed Mount Everest; more than 300 people have journeyed into space; 12 people walked on the moon; but only 2 people have ever descended to the bottom of the ocean and returned.

□ 1815

They are about that. I mean, we just do not know about the ocean. We know more about the Moon than we know about the oceans on the planet.

So we are going to spend the next few months here developing an oceans bill that I think will set the policy for this country, which will hopefully lead the policy of the world and the mechanism for ensuring that the oceans can be managed on an ecosystem basis and they can be cleaned up and made as the lungs of this Earth for children for generations to come.

It is the responsibility of this generation. We have found it in bad shape, and we have got to leave it in better shape.

I would just conclude on this Earth Day by inviting everybody to go out this weekend to celebrate Earth Day. There are all kinds of activities in your local community. I think the best quote about Earth Day and ourselves is what Teddy Roosevelt once reminded this country. He said: "Do what you can with what you have where you are. Just do it."

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California (Mr.

FARR) must feel no small sense of satisfaction. I know that he was the driving force behind the first ocean's conference with President Clinton in his beautiful district in Monterey, bringing home how important this is to all of us. And I extend my deep appreciation for his leadership, insight, and patience.

Mr. FARR. Let us hope we can get some good legislation adopted.

Mr. Speaker, I will include my statement for the RECORD at this point.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad that we are holding this special order on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of Earth Day.

It is important that we take the time to recognize the importance of environmental conservation efforts and renew our commitment to them until we make everyday Earth Day.

We all must do our parts to be good stewards of our ocean, our land and our atmosphere. This is the only planet that we have after all.

Earth Day was born at a time of great concern over the degradation of the environment and the effects of that degradation on all species, including humans.

I like to think of Earth Day as an ecological version of New Year's Day—a time to reflect, take stock and make resolutions.

With that in mind, I want to take my time in this special order to talk about our oceans—two thirds of the earth that we need to know a lot more about.

Tuesday's release of the "U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy's" report marks a milestone for our oceans and for the way we view them. Their report is the result of almost 2 years of reflecting and taking stock of our current ocean management practices.

For the first time in more than 30 years, we as a nation, have re-considered our relationship with the sea. Unfortunately, the past 30 years have not been kind to our oceans.

Plain and simple our oceans are in a state of crisis—a crisis that affects each and every one of us.

Today, between one third and one half of the world's population lives within 50 miles of the coast.

We all depend on our oceans and coasts from the person who lives off the water to the person who visits once in a lifetime.

The oceans provide food, jobs, vacation spots, scientific knowledge, and opportunities for reflection, our movies our art and music.

In spite of this we tend to act with a great deal of ignorance about how our own activities actually threaten that economic value. In fact we have limited knowledge of how oceans work as an ecosystem.

I have some interesting numbers that I want to share with you. More than 1,500 people have successfully climbed Mount Everest. More than 300 people have journeyed to space. 12 people have walked on the moon. Yet, only two people have descended and returned in a single dive to the deepest part of the ocean.

Think about it—we know more about the moon than oceans on earth.

This morning I was testifying on the other side of the Capitol at the Senate Commerce Committee.

I met with Bob Ballard who showed me the most recent edition of *Oceanography*. He showed me two pictures. The first was of Mars

and the second was of the ocean floor. What caught my eye was, to date, our pictures of outer space are 250 times higher resolution than from the ocean's depths.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned Earth Day was born at a time of great concern over the deprivation of our environment and out of this grass root effort we saw dramatic changes.

We proved that if we put our minds and resources to the problem, as we did in putting a man on the moon, we could bring things right again. We made giant progress with the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act.

Sadly, these land mark pieces of legislation have recently come under fire, administratively there has been a failure to investigate violations and enforce the laws on the books.

Protection of our oceans will require a change of course, a commitment from Congress and the administration. This commitment must be in the form of a new ocean ethic; one that is ecosystem-based with a governance structure that protects, restores, and maintains healthy marine ecosystems.

Regrettably, all too often we take our oceans for granted: We underestimate their value and we ignore the negative consequences human-related activities can have on them.

Our oceans represent the largest public trust resource in the U.S. and cover an area nearly one and a half times the size of the continental United States.

Americans expect the Government to safeguard this vast resource and I hope that the report just released will be the motivation for us to actually begin to do so.

Simply put, our current ocean and coastal management system, created over thirty years ago, is archaic and incompatible with new knowledge about how the oceans and coastal waters function as a whole.

Our policies are fragmented, both institutionally and geographically.

For example, today we find ourselves with over ten federal departments involved in the implementation of more than 130 ocean-related statutes.

It is time to reconsider this incoherent and often times incompatible management situation and bring order to our ocean governance structure.

The U.S. Commission's Report and last year's Pew Report offer some guidance on how to do just this.

We now know the natural world functions as interdependent ecosystems, with each species intricately connected to the other parts that make up the whole.

The U.S. Commission's Report, as well as the independent Pew Oceans Commission Report released last June, clearly states that we must adopt a new policy framework that is based on the concept of "the whole," an ecosystem-based approach rather than one based on political boundaries.

This approach will not be as easy or straight forward as our previous approaches, but we must pass the legislation necessary to make it a reality.

Part of making it a reality is creating a strong regional governance structure. With a comprehensive national ocean policy explicitly written to maintain healthy ocean ecosystems, our oceans will be a bountiful resource in which we can all take pride.

The Report also stresses the importance of instilling a new ecosystem-based stewardship

ethic. Involved in instilling this ethic is increasing ocean-related education for all Americans at all levels, from first-graders learning how to read to graduate students investigating challenging scientific processes.

The U.S. Commission details suggestions on how we can instill a new stewardship ethic by emphasizing and investing in greater marine science education.

The Report released earlier this week is, technically, a Preliminary Report. It is being sent to the Governors for their comments. This comment period lasts until May 21, 2004. I urge all my colleagues to contact their Governors, let them know how important this issue is.

I sincerely hope that all states will take this opportunity to acknowledge that the oceans provide value for every American, whether intrinsic worth or direct economic benefit, and provide the Commission with input before the comment period ends.

Despite historic and geographic patterns suggesting otherwise, every state has a role to play in the management of our oceans.

The bipartisan House Oceans Caucus leadership is drafting legislation—the BOB, or Big Oceans Bill—that sets our country on the right path—the path of protecting our oceans.

Many of the details are still being worked out; however, the broad sections of BOB include national governance, regional governance, science and technology, and education.

We will be introducing our legislation this session. We have high hopes that our comprehensive bill will receive hearings and be considered this year, thereby demonstrating the bipartisan nature of the importance of protecting the health of our oceans for future generations.

It is up to each of us to not let this unprecedented opportunity pass us by. With the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and The Pew Oceans Commission Reports in the last year, the Bush Administration has a prime opportunity to take the steps necessary to instill a new ocean ethic in our government.

And, it's my earth day resolution to work with all my colleagues to make the decisions necessary to protect our largest public trust resource.

The time for leadership is now.

I will close with a quote from Commission's report:

The responsibility of our generation is to reclaim and renew the oceans for ourselves, for our children, and—if we do the job right—for those whose footprints will make the sands of beaches from Maine to Hawaii long after ours have washed away.

Don't forget to celebrate Earth Day, too. There are activities and festivities scheduled everywhere. Get out and participate, revel in the spring, and help build awareness just by being there. As Teddy Roosevelt once said: "Do what you can with what you have where you can."

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, next there is the opportunity to hear from the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS). Although she has been a more recent arrival to Congress, she has distinguished herself as a Member of the California legislature, as a tireless champion of the environment, of dealing with the problems at home on the neighborhood level, and has carried that passion back here affecting Fed-

eral policies. I am happy to yield to her.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for providing us with the opportunity to celebrate Earth Day. We do have much to celebrate, but we also have to reflect on what is happening here in our country and what policies are having effects in our communities.

I appreciate the fact that so many of my colleagues spoke before me very eloquently about the status of the environment here in our country. I am happy to talk a little bit about a place that I represent, and I represent the 32nd Congressional District in Southern California, much viewed by people as probably the armpit of America in many ways. Smog levels are very high. I have ownership of three Super fund sites. There are 17 gravel pits, many that are abandoned.

So we have various problems that exist in our district, many challenges, long before I was even born. But that does not mean that we give up the hope to fight to improve those conditions for the people that I represent. And I was very fortunate in the California legislature to work on environmental justice legislation, one of the first pieces of legislation in the entire country to be codified in the State of California. And as a result I believe there are close to 30 States now in this Union that have done likewise and have followed suit.

It is unfortunate, however, that this administration here does not believe in the true essence of environmental justice. And what environmental justice means for many Americans and for people that I represent is equal treatment under the law when placing projects in our districts. And, unfortunately, people have had blindfolds on their eyes when they come into our district because they place projects that have negative effects on our health in my district.

We have higher rates of asthma than other parts of L.A. County. We have children that cannot go out and play on the playgrounds when the summer heat goes up and the smog levels go up. We have children that have to go to the emergency trauma units because they are suffering from asthmatic attacks, both children and our elderly. We see that our drinking water is also contaminated.

For many years there were prior Congressmen, for example, Congressman Torres, who led the way to clean up our basin almost 20 years ago. We still have not found a solution to entirely clean up our local area. Perchloric contaminates our water. That is rocket fuel that was allowed to enter into our water table through Department of Defense contractors. Many have come to the table to try to clean that up, but we have not gone far enough.

And just yesterday we had a hearing in the Committee on Energy and Commerce regarding DOD exemptions that

this administration would like to see rip away at the protections that we have in our States such as California. I came out strongly opposed to those exemptions as did many attorneys general representing many States as well as many water agencies and purveyors that want to provide clean water to millions and millions of people who live in our country. We need to do the right thing. And I know that I can count on my colleagues here that have spoken this evening to help educate the public that, in fact, there are Members of this Congress who are willing to fight, willing to stay here late, to do the right thing, to make sure that we do not erode the protections that have been in place for the last 50 years.

And, as a new Member of Congress, I would like to say that I am proud to represent the district that I come from, East Los Angeles, that many people forget about. People there are experiencing high levels of unemployment. Many of them have low skills, low educational levels; and they live in the dirtiest communities in our country, and it is not fair. That is why we need strong laws. That is why we need adequate funding to protect everybody on an equal and fair basis.

And I applaud the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) and all the Members that have come forward tonight to share with us that Earth Day, in fact, should be a celebration for the entire world.

In Spanish we say "para todo el mundo." That means the entire world. The entire world is looking at us right now to see that we do the right thing, to see that we address the issues of global warming, water pollution, clean air. Those are the things that my community is advocating for, and I am going to continue to fight for that.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I think it is clear that there is very little likelihood that East Los Angeles will be forgotten with my colleague's eloquence, her insights, and her leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to turn to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), who has represented several congressional districts. He has distinguished himself with the wilderness and with energy and with thinking about how these pieces fit together for the future. I am honored to yield to him this evening.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to join this effort on Earth Day. I have two messages, one inspirational and one that desires, frankly, a good fight. Let me start with the inspirational message. I want to tell my colleague about a friend of mine, a Dennis Hayes, who as a young man the first Earth Day stood up and said, I am going to become personally committed to the environment of the globe. And he became, actually, the manager of the organization that conducted the first Earth Day. And Dennis Hayes is still fired with the vigor of dealing with these multiple environmental challenges, and he is working

in Seattle now for the Bullet Foundation, which helps promote many great ideas and environmental agendas.

I hope other people who are of his youth become inspired on multiple environmental challenges now, politically and otherwise, and stay working as long as Dennis has, who is still working on solar cell technology and a host of other efforts to deal with our energy.

I appreciate this opportunity. We will have other opportunities next week to continue this discussion.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, the 34th annual Earth Day is a time to reflect on our stewardship of the environment: where we have been, and where we are going. We should use this opportunity to rethink our current direction. America's status-quo energy policy is untenable. Our dependence on fossil fuels is polluting our air and water, overheating our planet, and tying up our foreign policy. Yet a sustainable, energy-efficient future lies before us—if we are willing to reach for it.

The consequences of fossil fuel use are everywhere. The Environmental Protection Agency determined that almost 500 counties across the country suffer from unhealthy levels of smog that must be reduced. Gas prices have hit record highs, which bites into the cost of living for ordinary Americans and threatens economic growth. Our dependence on oil limits our foreign policy and makes us rely on other nations for survival. And behind it all looms global warming.

The biggest lost opportunity of the current Administration has been the failure to set a goal for this country of halving our dependence on fossil fuels in the next decade. I believe in the American entrepreneur and our ability to develop technologies that will dramatically reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. Many of those technologies already exist. Many are on our roads. But they must be nurtured if they are to develop further.

The first step is to encourage the use of hybrid gas-electric cars. These cars have double the gas mileage of standard cars and dramatically lower emissions. Moreover, unlike other clean car technologies, they are also available now in meaningful numbers. With a small encouragement, we can bring about the widespread adoption of this exciting new technology.

Hybrids are only the first step. We should draw on our technological prowess to solve our energy challenges with renewable sources of energy that reduce pollution, such as solar, geothermal, biomass, landfill gas, and fusion. I have great confidence in America's technological know-how in solving these challenges; our national public policy should aim to create research and development incentives for the public sector to partner with the private sector in bringing promising technologies to market. As a nation, we must reduce pollution and help leave a sustainable energy future for our children.

Together, we can turn our country away from its current unhealthy practices and toward a cleaner, more sustainable tomorrow. It will not be easy, but it must be done.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, on this Earth Day, I think it is vital to point out the increasing need for this country and this Congress to put together a sensible, rational energy policy that

lowers our dependence on fossil fuels and continues to stimulate our economy.

Developing such a policy is not simply about protecting our environment. From a national security standpoint, our dependence on oil, especially in the transportation sector, is a continuing danger. You can look under every rock and drill in every inch of wilderness and coastline we have, and we will simply never be able to meet our current level of consumption. The sobering fact is that the Middle East contains a tremendous share of the world's oil supply—and the more we remain dependent on their oil, the more we expose ourselves and the world to violence and terrorism.

From a public health standpoint, we can no longer rely so heavily on those energy sources that are poisoning us. Coal is cheap and abundant in the U.S.—but its emissions, including mercury and sulfur dioxide, cause thousands of premature deaths and diseases like emphysema and asthma every year. These are the very human costs that we must consider when we think about where we are getting our energy.

Of course, the environmental impact of our dangerous addiction to fossil fuels is well known. Even as our cars get cleaner, their combined carbon dioxide emissions, along with those from power plants and other sources, are largely to blame for global warming. The emissions from burning coal foul the air, creating smog and acid rain, while mercury falls to the ground and pollutes our waterways.

Equally troubling is the way we extract fossil fuels—to get coal, we rip off the tops of mountains and dump them into nearby streams; to get oil and natural gas, we drill extensively, often risking spillage. The oil and gas industries seem to have an insatiable appetite for opening and exploiting our most precious lands and our coastlines—yet even they must realize that we cannot drill our way to a better energy future.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation we passed in this House last year was not an energy policy. It was a grab bag of goodies for special interests. The bill reads as if every sector of the energy industry simply submitted their wish lists, translated nicely into legislative language—much like the development of the recommendations of the Vice President's Energy Task Force.

What we really need is a rational energy policy that puts us on the road to a more secure energy future. We should invest in research into renewable and sustainable sources and energy efficiency. We should set intelligent goals for the future: ten, twenty, fifty years in the future, how much energy should we be producing from each source? How much should we be consuming in each sector—transportation, residential, industrial? How can we protect our environment and our health while meeting the energy needs of a growing economy? We should also get our hands around the growing demand across the country for gas for our cars, electricity for our lights and computers, and natural gas for our heat—and find out how to be efficient as possible with all of that consumption.

I would like to lay out a challenge to all of my colleagues. Let's reject the stalled energy legislation. Let's move beyond the politics of squeezing every last bit of oil, gas, and coal out of this country and work on policies that envision a sustainable, secure energy future.

A future where more of our energy needs are met by those sustainable sources like wind fusion, the sun, and biomass. A future where Americans don't have to sacrifice their own health just to keep using their air conditioners. A future where cartels like OPEC no longer hold us captive to the volatile world oil market and our energy needs no longer imperil national security. A future where protecting our environment and meeting our energy needs go hand in hand.

To do so will take patience, research, and some innovative thinking. I plan to do all of these in the coming months and years, and I hope my colleagues will join with me.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, Earth Day is a great day to call attention to the many environmental and public health challenges that face everyone on the planet. It is also a great opportunity to reflect on the history of the Earth Day movement and to pay tribute to one of recent history's great statesmen and founding father of the movement, our former Senator from Wisconsin, Gaylord Nelson.

Today, people all around the nation are celebrating Earth Day. Local communities have organized events to, once again, bring to the public eye the importance of working together to improve our quality of life and to protect our natural heritage.

However, without the leadership of a passionate public servant from Wisconsin, we would not be breathing air as clean. We would not be swimming in lakes, rivers and streams as safe. We would not be enjoying the beauty of public lands as special as those we were able to protect under laws he championed. We would not be holding Earth Day celebrations each year on April 22nd.

Earth Day was "born" in September, 1969. Senator Gaylord Nelson was invited to give a speech at a conference held at the Seattle Science Center. In his speech, he suggested that, just as Americans had been involved in "teach-ins" to protest the Vietnam war, the country should also set aside a day to call attention to the environmental problems facing our planet and to demand that Congress address those important issues. He expressed his firm belief that the American people needed to put their leaders "on notice," and he encouraged folks everywhere to explain to their elected officials that they were tired of empty promises. It was time for real action on the environment.

At that same conference, he suggested that in the spring of 1970, there should be a nation-wide grassroots demonstration on behalf of the environment, and he encouraged the listening public to participate. Wire services carried the story from coast to coast, and as history showed, the response was overwhelmingly positive.

Within hours of that Seattle speech, telegrams, letters and telephone inquiries from across the country poured into his Senate office. His phones in the Capitol were literally ringing off the hook, as people called in to say that they wanted to organize Earth Day celebrations in their own communities. It was obvious that Senator Nelson had struck a chord, and that this was an idea whose time had come. Over the next four months, the calls and letters increased in number until his Senate staff was overwhelmed by the response. At that point, he decided to hire several talented students to help organize and respond to peoples' calls to action.

Senator Nelson himself has said that no one individual or group had either the time or the resources to organize and coordinate all of the activities of the 20 million people and thousands of schools, community groups and others who made the first Earth Day such a success. Instead, he credits the many dedicated people in communities across the country, that were sparked to organize at the local level in response by his speech, and send a loud and clear wake-up call to their elected officials on the issue of environmental health. While his speech had resonated with Americans everywhere, and was clearly a catalyst for change, he insists that no single individual was responsible for organizing the first Earth Day. Rather, Earth Day 1970 literally organized itself. It is, to this day, a stellar example of how individuals can make a difference and literally change history.

In April 1970, twenty million people spoke out for the environmental health of the planet—rich people and poor people, young and old, farmers and city dwellers, Republicans and Democrats—stood together for the planet. A week-long series of Earth Day events in Philadelphia drew over 30,000 people to Independence Mall on April 21, 1970 and an estimated 75,000 people to Fairmount Park on Earth Day itself, April 22. People came in droves to listen to the keynote speaker and author of the landmark 1970 Clean Air Act, Senator Edmund Muskie.

Following that initial activism, thousands more attended events at every college in that region during that week. The organizers of those events accomplished this without having any contact with Senator Nelson, his staff, or any other national coordinating body. Like ripples in a pond, thousands of people in other communities across the country organized their own local Earth Day events in 1970 until the movement was 20 million strong. Today, local, ad hoc Earth Day groups continue to organize their own events on April 22, focusing on the local, regional, national or global issues that matter most to them. That was and continues to be the strength and power of Earth Day.

As Senator Nelson is fond of pointing out, it is the activist students and folks in communities across the country, and their actions as a group rather than those of any one individual, who ensured the environment finally took its place as a priority issue on the national political agenda. They made possible the dramatic environmental gains of the past 34 years. We are all in debt to that generation of young people—grade school, high school, and college—who supplied the energy, enthusiasm, and idealism that made Earth Day such a spectacular success. Earth Day was and is a pluralistic event in which every individual and every group that wants to be involved is able to do so, and claim "ownership" of the day.

Twenty years later, Earth Day has gone global and more than 200 million people from 141 countries participated in the last celebration. However, the millions who rallied on that first Earth Day are what gave Senator Nelson's simple idea its power. And in 1995, while celebrating the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, President Bill Clinton appropriately honored Senator Nelson's timely contribution to the movement by presenting him with the Medal of Freedom.

We can all be proud and grateful for the contribution of one of Wisconsin's great

statesmen, the thoughtful and provocative founding father of Earth Day, Senator Gaylord Nelson.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, with today's celebration of Earth Day marked locally by public anxiety over lead contamination in our area drinking water, I thought it fitting to commemorate the life of Clair Patterson, a scientist who worked singlehandedly to reduce our exposure to lead and, in the process, save millions of lives.

As a scientist specializing in the environment, Clair Patterson's pioneering work stretched across an unusual number of sub-disciplines, including archaeology, meteorology, oceanography, chemistry and geology. Despite these many areas of expertise, he is best known for determining the age of the Earth.

The son of a postal worker, Clair Patterson began a lifelong attraction to chemistry that began at an early age and ultimately led to a thesis in molecular spectroscopy. Besides working on the Manhattan Project, he continued his dissertation in 1951 and analyzed lead samples that gave lead isotopic compositions for minerals separated from a billion-year-old sample of Precambrian granite.

Prompted by a visit to the U.S. Geological Survey in Washington DC, Mr. Clair Patterson began research that opened up a new field of dating for geologists. This led to hundreds of age determinations based on his methods and techniques and affirmed his predictions on the most accurate age of the planet.

In 1962, he and other scientists observed that the lead concentration in the deeper parts of the Pacific Ocean were 3 to 10 times less than surface water. These observations provided new evidence that human industrial activity had disturbed the natural geochemical cycle for lead and raised concentrations levels.

He could have stopped there and returned to his scientific and academic pursuits. He did not and for that we should all be grateful. He deserves recognition today for taking a different path. A path that invited controversy, derision from many of his peers and even threats from industries he challenged. When he found that the lead concentration in the blood of many Americans was over 100 times that of the natural level, and dangerously close to the accepted limit for symptoms of lead poisoning to occur, he began to track down the sources of lead contamination and take on the industries responsible for polluting the environment with lead and challenged governments, Federal, State and local to limit our exposure.

He wrote to California Governor Pat Brown emphasizing the dangerously high levels of lead in aerosols, particularly in the Los Angeles area. In it he claimed that the California Department of Public Health was not doing all it should to protect the population from the dangers of lead poisoning. By 1966, Governor Brown signed a bill directing the State Department of Public Health to hold hearings and to establish air quality standards for California by February 1, 1967. Although that deadline was not met, Patterson clearly played a role in advancing concern over California air control standards.

He testified before the Senate Subcommittee on Air and Water Pollution in 1966. Patterson believed it was wrong for public health agencies to work so closely with lead

industries, whom he considered often biased in matters concerning public health.

By 1970, Patterson and his colleagues had completed studies of snow strata from Greenland and Antarctica that showed clearly the increase in atmospheric lead began with the industrial revolution. Modern Greenland snow contained over 100 times the amount of lead in pre-industrial snow, with most of the increase occurring over the last 100 years.

In 1971, he criticized a National Research Council report on the Environmental Protection Agency's policies on lead pollution as not being forceful enough in interpreting its data and being too heavily weighted toward industrial scientists. Although Patterson's work was initially ignored, by December 1973 the EPA announced a program to reduce lead in gasoline by 60–65 percent in phased steps. Thus was the beginning of the removal of lead from gasoline.

In the late 1970s Patterson turned his attention to lead in food. He wrote to the commissioner of food and drugs at the Environmental Protection Agency asserting that his headquarters laboratory could not correctly analyze for lead in tuna fish and called for more accurate analysis. Patterson made several recommendations for improvements that were taken seriously and prompted EPA to conduct better lead analyses.

In 1980, Patterson and a fellow researcher Dorothy M. Settle published a warning on the amount of lead entering the food chain due to lead solder used in sealing cans. By 1993 lead solder was removed from all food containers in the United States. Patterson's influence is again clearly evident.

Patterson was appointed in 1978 to a 12 member National Research Council panel to evaluate the state of knowledge about environmental issues related to lead poisoning. The panel report cite the need to reduce lead hazards for urban children (a finding that demands renewed attention following the Washington area's lead scare) and called for further research on the relationship between lead ingestion and intellectual ability.

In short, Patterson argued that the dangers of lead were already clear enough and that efforts should start immediately to drastically reduce or completely remove industrial lead from the everyday environment. That included gasoline, food containers, foils, paint, and glazes. He also cited water distribution systems and urged investigations into biochemical effects of lead at the cellular level.

As we reflect on Patterson's lifelong commitment to environmental health, we must listen to today's unsung heroes who are calling for more vigilant protection of public health and an end to the assault on our Nation's environmental laws that jeopardize the health of our children and grandchildren.

In a world increasingly marked by technological and scientific innovation, Clair Patterson's lifelong efforts demand renewed attention. On this Earth Day, as we see so many of our country's environmental laws being rolled back, let us honor Clair Patterson's lifelong commitment to finding that balance between modern technology and preserving the environmental and human health. We have a collective responsibility to preserve our natural surroundings for generations to come.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in commemoration of the 34th anniversary of Earth Day. Started in 1970 by Wisconsin's own Senator Gaylord Nelson, this annual celebration

marks the birth of the modern environmental movement.

For much of the 20th century, people accepted pollution as the inevitable price of progress. That began to change in the early 1960s. In 1970, when Senator Nelson saw that few U.S. leaders were paying attention to public concern about the environment, he announced a series of teach-ins across the country to be held on April 22. That year, 20 million people participated in the first Earth Day.

Soon after, the Congress passed and President Nixon signed a series of unprecedented laws creating the Environmental Protection Agency, establishing national limits for air and water pollutants, and requiring environmental impact assessments before federally funded projects could begin.

Sadly, the current administration seems to be doing all it can to reverse decades of bipartisan progress on the environment at the behest of large special interests. Landmark legislation that has successfully protected the public health such as the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Act are under assault.

It would appear that Senator Nelson's visionary efforts to build a grassroots movement to demonstrate the public's insistence on a clean and healthy environment for themselves and future generations, is needed as much today as it was 34 years ago.

And, in fact, Earth Day continues to be an event that unites people concerned about their environment, and who strive to protect it for our children's future. Last year, hundreds of millions of people in more than 180 countries around the world came together to celebrate the progress that has been made over the past 33 years.

Today, the vast majority of Americans do not believe that pollution is a necessary price for our progress, and want clean air, clean water and pristine public lands for their children. People want their government to improve, rather than undermine our country's public health and environmental protections. Instead of taking steps backwards, I urge the President to engage in the bipartisan work needed to build on a positive environmental agenda that Senator Gaylord Nelson envisioned when he started Earth Day.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, Earth Day, to discuss the critical importance of investing in America's clean water infrastructure. As we begin the 21st century, investment in water infrastructure stands as one of the most important economic and environmental investments our government will make.

Since 1972, our Nation has made important progress in improving the water quality of lakes, rivers and harbors across the land. However, we are at an important crossroad in the effort to make our Nation's waters fishable and swimmable. Recent studies by EPA, GAO and the Water Infrastructure Network all point to a water infrastructure funding crisis. According to EPA's Clean Water and Drinking Water Gap Analysis, America is facing a \$535 billion funding shortfall for water infrastructure over the next two decades. This analysis comes at a time when the Federal Government is committing less than \$2 billion dollars a year to water and wastewater infrastructure.

The most significant improvements in water quality have resulted from our investments in wastewater treatment—if we fail to replace

and upgrade existing wastewater treatment facilities we could see the progress of the past 30 years reversed. As we enter the summer months, over 30 million fishermen will head to their favorite fishing holes, millions more Americans will head to beaches and lakes for a refreshing swim. These simple summer pleasures share one common element—clean water.

Investing in clean water infrastructure also makes eminent economic sense. According to the American Public Works Association, over 40,000 jobs are created for every billion dollars that is invested in wastewater infrastructure construction.

As we reflect on the importance of clean water to our quality of life, I believe it is time to consider providing water infrastructure with the same funding priority we assign to highways and airports. Congress must begin considering long-term, dedicated funding for our Nation's water infrastructure.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Earth Day, it is important to reflect upon our environmental accomplishments and plan for the environmental challenges ahead. For over three decades investments in clean water infrastructure, wastewater treatment facilities, have been the linchpin of water quality improvements in lakes, rivers and bays. Today, over 30 million Americans enjoy fishing in waters that have been improved through wastewater treatment investments.

Unfortunately, the future of clean water has become increasingly murky. According to analysis conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency and confirmed in studies by the Water Infrastructure Network and the Government Accounting Office, America is facing a water and wastewater infrastructure funding gap that will exceed \$500 billion over the next 20 years. This infrastructure funding crisis, if not addressed, will have devastating economic and environmental consequences for our Nation.

Historically, Congress has developed legislation providing long-term, dedicated sources of funding for massive infrastructure investment priorities. Our Nation's highway and aviation infrastructure needs are funded primarily through dedicated trust funds. I believe it is time to begin a constructive dialogue between State, local and Federal officials on how our Nation is going to ensure that needed investments in clean water infrastructure are going to be made in the future.

Ms. McCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the 34th anniversary of Earth Day, I rise to recognize the ongoing struggle to preserve and protect our environment for future generations. We have made significant progress since the first Earth Day in 1970, but recent funding cuts and policy changes are now jeopardizing vital environmental programs such as the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act. The Natural Resources Defense Council, a national organization that advocates environmental action, recently released a report, "Rewriting the Rules," which documents more than 150 assaults on our environmental safeguards between January 2003 and March 2004. Of particular concern is the rollback of environmental regulations that keep sewage out of our waterways and drinking water, protect our public lands, and limit mercury pollution in our air. As the principal sponsor of Missouri's Clean Air and Air Emissions Standards Acts during my tenure in the state legislature

and as Chairwoman of the Missouri Commission on Global Climate Change and Ozone Depletion, I am alarmed and concerned by these weakened standards. Earth Day was created in 1970 as a call to action after drastic environmental events such as the chemical emergency at Love Canal and the "death" of Lake Erie. This massive environmental protest drew attention to environmental problems plaguing communities across our country. Today, we must continue that commitment to preserve our planet not only on our continent, but around the world. As we honor the 34th anniversary of Earth Day, we acknowledge the achievements of some of our most conscientious global environmental leaders. On April 19, the Sierra Club awarded the 15th annual Goldman Environmental Prize to several grassroots activists who have worked to make our world a better place to live.

These seven leaders, Rudolf Amenga-Etego of Ghana, Rashida Bee and Chama Devi Shukla of India, Manana Kochladze of Georgia, Demetrio Do Amaral de Carvalho of East Timor, Margie Eugene-Richard of the U.S., and Libia Grueson of Colombia, have made significant contributions to their communities: providing safe drinking water for the people, seeking justice for world disaster survivors, blocking the construction of environmentally damaging oil pipelines, leading reforestation and watershed management programs, fighting pollution and protecting rainforests. Yet as these global activists serve their communities and work to better their environment, here in the United States we are rolling back much of the progress our own leaders have made. We must reverse this direction and restore our commitment to the environment, to breathable air and drinkable water, and to preservation of wildlife and our quality of life.

On the first Earth Day in 1970, I joined more than 20 million Americans in demonstrating for a healthy, sustainable environment. I have worked at the state and federal levels for landmark legislation such as the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act, Global Climate Change and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency, among other legislative initiatives.

This Saturday, I join members of my community in celebrating our local progress at the Eighth Annual Bridging the Gap Earth Day Walk. Kansas City has developed a plan to restore and maintain our natural resources for current and future generations. I worked with the city to assure biodiesel as an alternative source of energy for our buses in order to maintain our air quality for the health of our citizens.

There is much more we must do to ensure the protection of our environment. We must strengthen, not weaken, regulations that protect our natural resources. We must provide necessary funding for programs that ensure the quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink. On this 34th anniversary of Earth Day, we must pledge to continue our commitment to protecting and preserving our environment.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing this important anniversary of Earth Day and saluting organizations like the Sierra Club that act globally to honor those who work for sustaining our planet.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on Earth Day, to speak out in support of policies that protect our planet, promote energy security,

and preserve human health. Unfortunately, in its 3 years in office, the Bush administration has launched an all-out assault on our environment in all three of these areas.

Bush policies have weakened protections on air, water, and public lands, and these assaults pose a direct threat to public health now and in the future. The actions we take now to protect these vital resources and to reinvent our approach to energy will have enormous consequences for future generations. Global warming, perhaps the most catastrophic and far-reaching consequence of our current practices, will not wait; our efforts to tackle these problems can't wait either.

We need to begin by preserving existing protections, from maintaining the well being of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge by continuing to ban drilling in this precious wilderness to maintaining the well being of our children by halting the disastrous Bush administration rollbacks of our clean air and water regulations.

Our next step must be enforcement of existing laws and regulations. The Republican budget cuts environmental programs by \$39 billion. At those levels, we cannot enforce existing public health safeguards. To make matters worse, the administration has abandoned the "polluter pays" principle: taxpayers, not the polluters themselves, will now be responsible for the costs of cleaning up toxic Superfund sites. And one in every four people in this country live within 4 miles of a major toxic waste site on the Superfund list.

For people of color, these numbers are even worse and so are the consequences. Life expectancy itself is an environmental justice issue. In this country, life expectancy projections are shaped as much by race as by gender. These disparities follow a cradle to grave cycle: beginning with infant mortality, continuing with workplace hazards and increased exposure to pollution, and ending with disparate access to healthcare, diagnoses, and medical treatment.

We see these forces clearly in diseases that strike most deeply into our cities and affect children most severely. Asthma rates among the urban poor are reaching alarming proportions. Death rates from asthma, and a host of other treatable diseases, are significantly higher among African Americans than any other ethnic group. Asthma rates in Oakland, in my district, are among the highest in the country. Children in West Oakland are seven times more likely to be hospitalized for asthma than children in the rest of California.

On Earth Day, it is important that we recognize just what is at stake here: our air, our water, our lands, and our children's health. We need to stop the Bush administration's assault on existing protections, and we need to invest in new solutions, especially in the energy arena, that will increase our own security as well as protect the environment around us.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the world recognizes Earth Day, to express my strong concern with a recent proposal by the administration to weaken standards on mercury emissions from power plants.

This administration seems to have forgotten that Earth Day is our special day to look at the planet and see what needs changing. We should be moving forward with environmental policy, as we have done for nearly 35 years. Unfortunately, I fear that this administration is set on reversing these decades of progress.

My constituents and other Americans are being shortchanged by attempts to weaken clean water and clean air standards, particularly the mercury proposal. As co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues, I am very concerned that women and children, the groups who are at most risk from mercury exposure, are hurt by this proposal. A recent analysis by the EPA indicates that 1 in 6 women of childbearing age have levels of mercury in their blood at unsafe levels; 1 in 12 women of childbearing age has enough mercury in her system to pose a potential threat to fetal health. This contamination results in more than 600,000 newborns at risk of neurological problems due to mercury exposure.

We need to take immediate action to reduce women and children's exposure to mercury. Under the Clean Air Act, toxic substances like mercury must be controlled at each and every power plant by using the maximum achievable control technologies. Two years ago, EPA estimated that under this standard, existing technologies could reduce 90 percent of mercury pollution from power plants, bringing mercury emissions down to roughly 5 tons per year by 2008.

Unfortunately, EPA's proposed mercury standards are not protective of public health. The emission limits proposed are 10–20 times higher than what some plants achieve today. In the end, EPA's proposal allows power plants to emit six to seven times more mercury into our airways for a decade longer compared what EPA has said is achievable. I call on the administration to significantly strengthen this approach so that as much mercury as possible is removed from the emissions of each and every power plant.

It is sad that this administration has absolutely no environmental accomplishments on its record. The administration has repeatedly ignored the dangers that environmental toxins like mercury pose to women and children, and instead bends over backwards to cater to their friends in polluting industries. We cannot continue to play politics with human health, the environment and our children's futures.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, as you know, Earth Day marks a day of reflection for the American public, an opportunity to evaluate our progress in the fight to protect our environment. This past year we have seen the Bush administration's blatant disregard for the environment. Each one of us has the responsibility to stand up for environmental protection irrespective of the wishes of special interests. However, my Republican colleagues have failed to keep our Nation's commitment to a healthy and secure environment.

I have been here for a long time. I am proud of the role I played in many of our cornerstone environmental laws. In the 1970s, we recognized that we owe it to future generations to protect the environment, the laws we passed were not revolutionary, they were common sense. These laws were passed on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis. One could even say that these environmental laws were so important that they were, in fact, nonpartisan.

Sadly, the tide has turned.

The Bush administration has shown, over and over again, that they care more about their corporate buddies than the health and well-being of the American public. This has resulted in the weakening of some of our most fundamental environmental protections, including the Clean Water Act and the National Environ-

mental Policy Act. Producing profits for their fat cat friends has given rise to plans to open protected lands for oil and gas drilling. Commercial logging companies have been invited into our national forests and attempts to dredge and fill our wetlands. Mr. Speaker, this administration does not recognize that we can have, and we have had, both economic booms and environmental protection. The two are not mutually exclusive.

One item on this extreme, anti-environment agenda is altering our current Superfund program. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have abandoned the "polluter pays" principle and have instead turned to the taxpayer to "pay the polluter" and shoulder the cost of toxic waste cleanups. In 1995, the Clinton administration paid for 82 percent of toxic waste clean-ups from the Superfund Trust Fund, funded by polluter-paid fees. The current administration, on the other hand, has emptied this fund and are handing the bill to the American taxpayer. Furthermore, the swiftness of cleanups has declined 45 percent from the average of 87 sites per year during President Clinton's second term to a mere 40 sites in 2003. Polluters need to be held responsible, which is why "polluter pays" should be restored.

Furthermore, my Republican colleagues have undermined the safeguards put in place by the Clean Water Act. President Bush's guidance to federal agencies has left 20 million acres of wetlands and countless miles of streams unprotected. What's more, the administration is proposing to slash states' Clean Water revolving loan funds by \$492 million in 2005. Mr. Speaker, the Clean Water Act protects all waters of the United States, a fact this administration fails to see. Today, as a result of the Clean Water Act, our lakes, rivers, and streams are in considerably better condition than they were 30 years ago. But that progress can easily be lost. We cannot let these unprincipled rascals in the White House continue to roll back the Clean Water Act.

An additional assault on our environmental laws appears in President Bush's forest policy. I am particularly concerned that President Bush's plan calls for overriding and ignoring many environmental rules, resulting in the stifling of public input and the reliance on private industry to do work on local forests. This outlandish plan attempts to justify destroying forests in the name of saving them. The roadless rule has opened pristine forests, such as the Tongass National Forest, to logging projects, threatening one of America's few remaining temperate rain forests. As the author of the National Environmental Policy Act, I believe the Federal Government must weigh the environmental consequences of an action before it is undertaken. This is a common sense law that needs to be enforced, not rolled back.

When I first arrived in Congress, the United States had virtually no environmental protection statutes on the books. Businesses, governments and individuals could spew into the air, pump into the water, or dump onto the ground virtually anything—with impunity. Our Government has made strong environmental gains during the past generation and the current administration is a threat to that progress. Ultimately, it must be our goal as a nation to create and maintain a vibrant, thriving and healthy ecosystem.

Mr. Speaker, we borrow the Earth from future generations, and we owe it to these future

inhabitants to protect it to the best of our ability. We have serious environmental problems, but unfortunately, the Bush administration is making matters worse, not better.

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show strong support for Earth Day. It is a great opportunity to encourage citizens to be conscious and take action regarding their responsibility towards environmental protection.

The first Earth Day was held in 1970 as an annual event to honor our planet and our responsibility for it. Earth Day's purpose is to educate our citizens of the importance of conserving the environment and to encourage them to restore their local community, improving quality of life and human health for all.

The natural resources of Earth are the essential components of our environment and the development of life; therefore our dedication to its conservation is very important for sustaining future generations. Currently, Puerto Rico, as well as the rest of the world, is facing many environmental challenges due primarily to human development and environmental pollution. Essential resources such as water, air, soil and biodiversity are threatened by human activity. The existing population of Puerto Rico is almost 4 million people and this overpopulation results in limited available resources to support its residents. Water scarcity and contamination, air pollution and climate change, the destruction of natural habitats for construction, erosion causing water shortage, and the endangerment of many species are among the main problems that our environment is facing.

Pure water is essential for all life on Earth and provides habitat to many organisms. The human race is putting in serious danger this vital resource by the energy production, interruption of water flows, deforestation, and the wasting of water by those who overuse this resource. Air is an essential resource for life as well. Its pollution comes primarily from coal burning power plants, automobiles, and industrial operations. These activities affect not only human health but also the atmosphere that protects us from the sun's radiation. Human activities also destroy biodiversity through contamination, deforestation and destruction of natural habitats for construction and other developments. As humans, we are totally dependent on nature for survival and, instead of conserving, our actions negatively impact nature.

In Puerto Rico, we are faced with immediate challenges in areas like Vieques, Culebra and Roosevelt Roads, where contamination threatens the health and well being of thousands of residents, water quality, and sustainable economic development. Residents of these regions deserve full and prompt clean up and decontamination of their lands. Another challenge for the Island is the protection and recovery of endangered species population. Endemic species' population such as the golden coquí (*Eleutherodactylus jasperi*), the Puerto Rican boa (*Epicrates inornatus*), and the Puerto Rican parrot (*Amazona vittata*) that lives primarily at the Caribbean National Forest, El Yunque, have been significantly reduced due to encroachments of their habitats. The West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*) and the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) are other examples of endangered species as a result of marine contamination on coastal areas due to human development.

In order to protect some of the natural environment of Puerto Rico, I have introduced legislation designating approximately 10,000 acres of land in the Caribbean National Forest in Puerto Rico as the El Toro Wilderness and as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Through this legislation, the habitats within the El Toro Wilderness will be protected, as well as the forest's magnificent biodiversity.

It is necessary to educate our citizens about the importance of environmental conservation and conservation practices to maintain the natural resources of Puerto Rico and the rest of the world for future generations. This can be better accomplished by providing information through schools, communication media, conservation programs, and volunteer or special activities. Earth Day is a perfect moment to put in practice these goals by instructing and encouraging citizens to contribute to environmental conservation. As responsible and dedicated citizens to the conservation of our environment, Earth Day should become an every day priority to ensure and increase the quality of life and human health. Earth Day is not only one day; it is every day because every day is a good time to consider our environment, and take action to protect the nature that surrounds us.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURNS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

THE REAL LESSONS OF 9/11

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, we are constantly admonished to remember the lessons of 9/11. Of course, the real issue is not remembering, but rather knowing what the pertinent lesson of that sad day is. The 9/11 Commission will soon release its report after months of fanfare by those whose reputations are at stake.

The many hours and dollars spent on the investigation may well reveal little we do not already know, while ignoring the most important lessons that should be learned from this egregious attack on our homeland. Common sense already tells us the tens of billions of dollars spent by the agencies of government whose job it is to promote security and intelligence for our country failed.

A full-fledged investigation into the bureaucracy may help us in the future, but one should never pretend that a government bureaucracy can be made efficient. It is the very nature of a bureaucracy to be inefficient. Spending an inordinate amount of time finger-

pointing will distract from the real lessons of 9/11. Which agency, which department, or which individual receives the most blame should not be the main purpose of the investigation.

Despite the seriousness of our failure to prevent the attacks, it is disturbing to see how politicized the whole investigation has become. Which political party receives the greatest blame is a high-stakes election-year event and distracts from the real lessons ignored by both sides.

Everyone I have heard speak on the issue has assumed that the 9/11 attacks resulted from the lack of government action. No one in Washington has raised the question of whether our shortcomings brought to light by 9/11 could have been a result of too much government. Possibly in the final report we will hear this discussed, but, to date, no one has questioned the assumption that we need more government and, of course, though elusive, a more efficient one. The failure to understand the nature of the enemy who attacked us on 9/11, along with a predetermined decision to initiate a preemptive war against Iraq, prompted our government to deceive the people into believing that Saddam Hussein had something to do with the attacks on New York and Washington.

The majority of the American people still contend that the war against Iraq was justified because of the events of 9/11. These misinterpretations have led to many U.S. military deaths and casualties prompting a growing number of Americans to question the wisdom of our presence and purpose in a strange, foreign land 6,000 miles from our shores.

The neocon defenders of our policy in Iraq speak of the benefits that we have brought to the Iraqi people: removal of a violent dictator, liberation, democracy and prosperity. That the world is a safer place is yet to be proven. So far it is just not so.

If all of this were true, the resistance against our occupation would not be growing. We ought to admit we have not been welcomed as liberators as was promised by the proponents of the war. Though we hear much about the so-called benefits we have delivered to the Iraqi people and the Middle East, we hear little talk of the cost to the American people: lives lost, soldiers maimed for life, uncounted thousands sent home with diseased bodies and minds, billions of dollars consumed, and a major cloud placed over U.S. markets and the economy.

Sharp political divisions reminiscent of the 1960s are rising at home. Failing to understand why 9/11 happened and looking for a bureaucratic screw-up to explain the whole thing, while using the event to start an unprovoked war unrelated to 9/11, have dramatically compounded the problems all Americans and the world face.

Evidence has shown that there was no connection between Saddam Hussein and the guerrilla attacks on New