

"HOLD ON TO YOUR WALLET CONGRESS" IS AT IT AGAIN

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I know this is beginning to sound like a broken record, but the "Hold on to Your Wallet Congress" is at it again.

In today's latest episode, the liberal leadership has proposed another spending bill that will most likely be dead on arrival when it hits the President's desk because it shows disrespect for the taxpayers' dollar.

The Democrat Transportation-HUD spending bill provides for a whopping \$104.4 billion in spending for the next fiscal year, which is more than \$4 billion in new spending and more than \$2.8 billion above what the President requested.

The legislation increases spending for earmarks. And it does fail to address the very real solvency issues of the highway trust fund, which will face a \$4 billion shortfall in 2009.

The bill is irresponsible, sets the wrong priorities, and adds to the already staggering level of additional new spending in the 110th Congress.

The current Congress pledged to curb runaway spending, but instead they have moved it to the fast lane and they've set the pedal to the metal to see how fast they can spend your dollar.

INCREASE IN MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, as a senior member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I am proud that today many Americans will receive their first pay raise in a decade because the Fair Minimum Wage Act passed by the Democratic Congress goes into effect.

These hardworking Americans, 40 percent of whom are minorities, will receive a 70-cents-per-hour raise today, which will be followed by two more 70-cent increases in July 2008 and July 2009. This will result in a total of \$2.10 increase, or \$4,400 a year. This boost in pay will make a significant difference in the lives of these American families who are trying to survive on a minimum wage that has reached its lowest effective level in more than half a century. It means more food on their tables, better health care for their families, and a shot at sending their children to college.

Everyone who works full time should have the chance to achieve these pieces of the American Dream. And with this increase in minimum wage which begins today, they can.

I am proud to be a part of the Democratic Congress that passed this long overdue pay raise for millions of hard-working Americans. I want to note

that my home State of New Jersey led the way in an increase in minimum wage. Our minimum wage is already \$7.15 an hour, and that rate was effective since October 2006.

AUTHORIZING PRINTING OF CERTAIN PUBLICATIONS

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I send a concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 190) to the desk and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

1030

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, reserving the right to object, will the gentleman explain the resolution, please.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, this concurrent resolution provides for printing additional copies of three congressional publications that our constituents frequently request from us and of which supplies are nearly exhausted. Two of the publications are about the U.S. Constitution. With Constitution Day, September 17, approaching fast, we need to replenish our supplies so that Members can fulfill the requests from schools, civic organizations and others.

Madam Speaker, I know of no controversy and urge an "aye" vote.

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, under my reservation, I would simply comment that these are remarkably good documents. We make great use of them in the United States. Frankly, I would like to see the dollar limit removed, because these are very valuable documents for students in the schools. I know we receive many, many requests for them, frequently more than we can handle.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support the resolution with the one reservation that I wish we could increase the allocation; however, I don't want to stop the flow of democracy here.

Madam Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 190

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. HOW OUR LAWS ARE MADE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An edition of the brochure entitled "How Our Laws Are Made", as revised under the direction of the Parliamentarian of the House of Representatives in consultation with the Parliamentarian of the Senate, shall be printed as a House document under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing.

(b) ADDITIONAL COPIES.—In addition to the usual number, there shall be printed the lesser of—

(1) 550,000 copies of the document, of which 440,000 copies shall be for the use of the House of Representatives, 100,000 copies shall be for the use of the Senate, and 10,000 copies shall be for the use of the Joint Committee on Printing; or

(2) such number of copies of the document as does not exceed a total production and printing cost of \$479,247, with distribution to be allocated in the same proportion as described in paragraph (1), except that in no case shall the number of copies be less than 1 per Member of Congress.

SEC. 2. DOCUMENT-SIZED, ANNOTATED UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The 2007 edition of the document-sized, annotated version of the United States Constitution shall be printed as a House document under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing.

(b) ADDITIONAL COPIES.—In addition to the usual number, there shall be printed the lesser of—

(1) 550,000 copies of the document, of which 440,000 copies shall be for the use of the House of Representatives, 100,000 copies shall be for the use of the Senate, and 10,000 copies shall be for the use of the Joint Committee on Printing; or

(2) such number of copies of the document as does not exceed a total production and printing cost of \$535,853, with distribution to be allocated in the same proportion as described in paragraph (1), except that in no case shall the number of copies be less than 1 per Member of Congress.

SEC. 3. POCKET VERSION OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The 23rd edition of the pocket version of the United States Constitution shall be printed as a House document under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing.

(b) ADDITIONAL COPIES.—In addition to the usual number, there shall be printed the lesser of—

(1) 550,000 copies of the document, of which 440,000 copies shall be for the use of the House of Representatives, 100,000 copies shall be for the use of the Senate, and 10,000 copies shall be for the use of the Joint Committee on Printing; or

(2) such number of copies of the document as does not exceed a total production and printing cost of \$188,462, with distribution to be allocated in the same proportion as described in paragraph (1), except that in no case shall the number of copies be less than 1 per Member of Congress.

The current resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later today.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE DUMPING OF INDUSTRIAL WASTE INTO THE GREAT LAKES

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to

the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 187) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the dumping of industrial waste into the Great Lakes.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 187

Whereas the Great Lakes are the largest surface freshwater system on the planet;

Whereas the Great Lakes account for 95 percent of the United States' surface fresh water and about 21 percent of the world's supply;

Whereas the Great Lakes provide drinking water for more than 30 million Americans;

Whereas, on May 18, 2004, President George W. Bush said "the Great Lakes are a national treasure";

Whereas Congress has expressed its commitment to protecting the Great Lakes from pollutants and contaminants through the Clean Water Act and subsequent legislation;

Whereas the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Environment Canada joined together in promulgating the Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy to eliminate the presence of persistent toxic substances in the Great Lakes basin;

Whereas the "mixing zones" that dilute toxic chemicals discharged into the Great Lakes system have been controversial as a possible threat to humans, fish and wildlife;

Whereas the Great Lakes are plagued by pollutants such as mercury, PCBs, ammonia, DDT, alkylated lead, hexachlorobenzene, TCDD, toxaphene, and others;

Whereas high amounts of ammonia can cause algae blooms that threaten fish and water quality;

Whereas the Indiana Department of Environmental Management recently issued a permit to BP PLC to allow their facility in Whiting, IN, to release 54 percent more ammonia and 35 percent more total suspended solids into Lake Michigan each day;

Whereas the BP Whiting facility will now be allowed to dump an average of 1,584 pounds of ammonia and 4,925 pounds of total suspended solids daily into Lake Michigan;

Whereas the Great Lakes already face myriad challenges from chemicals and pollutants, including a steep increase in fish consumption warnings and record numbers of beach closures; and

Whereas Congress has a clear role in protecting the Great Lakes as an entity that spans across State and international boundaries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Congress expresses its disapproval of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's issuance of a permit allowing BP to increase their daily dumping of ammonia and total suspended solids into Lake Michigan;

(2) Congress urges the State of Indiana to reconsider issuance of a permit allowing BP to increase their daily dumping of ammonia and total suspended solids into Lake Michigan;

(3) Congress should take action to protect and restore the Great Lakes;

(4) the United States Environmental Protection Agency's actions in the Great Lakes basin should be consistent with the goal of preserving and restoring the Great Lakes; and

(5) the United States Environmental Protection Agency should not allow increased dumping of chemicals and pollutants into the Great Lakes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, we are gathered here to commemorate two extraordinary events. Forty years ago, the Cuyahoga River en route to Lake Erie caught fire and galvanized the attention of a Nation and the action of Congress to strengthen the Federal Water Pollution Control Act resulting in the Clean Water Act of 1972.

You would have thought that the Nation had learned its lesson with the Cuyahoga River incident and the other tragedies that befell the Great Lakes over the years; the invasion of lamprey eel and subsequent nonindigenous invasive species, and other tragedies, such as industrial dumping, that nearly resulted in the death of Lake Erie.

But here we are gathered, 40 years later, to face a report from the Chicago Tribune that the regulators in the State of Indiana have given permission for BP, one of the world's largest energy companies, to release half more ammonia than they are and one-third more sludge into Lake Michigan each day.

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) sprang to the defense of Lake Michigan, as have numerous of our colleagues that are gathered here with us today, and mobilized a resolution that we have under consideration today.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL).

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Minnesota, who has been a leader on the Great Lakes issue, and also my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, because this issue is not a Democratic or a Republican issue; it is an issue between right and wrong.

British Petroleum, who is now seeking to expand their refinery capacity in Indiana, has run advertising campaigns all over the country that they are "beyond petroleum." If they are allowed to dump more ammonia and mercury and other metals into the Great Lakes, BP's "beyond petroleum" will become standard for "big polluter."

I say that not just as a way to embarrass them, although I hope it accomplishes that goal. They have the capacity to live up to what they are advertising; that they are a company that is sensitive to the environment.

Thirty-seven million Americans now get their daily drinking water from the Great Lakes. It is the largest body of fresh water in North America. It contains 20 percent of the world's fresh water supply. It is the economic heart of the Midwest.

As my colleague Mr. OBERSTAR noted, the fire at the Cuyahoga River

and on Lake Erie galvanized the country. When I was growing up, prior to that bill, we used to run past the dead fish, dive into Lake Michigan, and swim 30 or 40 feet past all the dead fish to pop up. The Clean Water Act improved dramatically the environmental standard of Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, Lake Superior, Lake Ontario and all the Great Lakes. The question here is, are we going to move forward, or are we going to go back?

What is ironic about all of this is that this issue isn't about technology. They can do the refining to clean up and make sure that we don't dump ammonia and mercury and other environmental hazards into the lake. The question here is not technology or money. They are spending \$3.8 billion to expand this facility, which is a good thing to do, because it will help on the energy supply.

The question is they said they don't have the land mass to deal with it. They have 2.6 square miles there. If you look on the Google map, you can see the size of what they have. It is 1,600 acres. They have the land capacity to do this.

Now, I compliment British Petroleum on one other issue. They brought Democrats and Republicans together on a single issue. They are a uniter, not a divider. Usually we are divided here on other issues, so I want to compliment BP for having brought Democrats and Republicans together in a unique act of bipartisanship realizing that Lake Michigan and other Great Lakes deserve our support.

We have made great progress. The question before us is whether BP will live not only up to their advertising, but what this Congress has committed to do, and every Congress has committed to do for the last 30 years, is that when it comes to our lakes, our drinking waters, whether we are going to go forward or backward.

I would hope that BP would take this notion that what they are seeing today on the floor is the beginning of a pressure, and that they realize that the decision they make, they can do the right thing. I think every one of us knows that if they made a decision to expand their refinery with the environmental qualities, every one of us would put a resolution on the floor the next day praising them for that decision.

So they have the choice: We will join them and say that they are right. They are a company that literally puts their money where their mouth is. Are they "beyond petroleum," or will they be the company known as the "big polluter"? They have a choice.

I want to thank my colleague from Minnesota for having this resolution on the floor and taking the leadership and the time to commit to this.

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this issue before us first came to my attention 9 days ago in a July 15 story published in the Chicago Tribune entitled "BP Gets Break

Dumping in Lake." Shortly after that I went into a meeting which Mr. OBERSTAR was chairing, and I alerted him to the issue, because I know he loves the Great Lakes as much as I do.

That article highlighted the wastewater discharge permit granted by the State of Indiana to British Petroleum for its refinery facility in Whiting, Indiana, on the shores of Lake Michigan. The new permit allows BP to discharge an average of 1,584 pounds of ammonia per day, up from 1,030 pounds per day, a 54 percent increase above the old limit. The new permit also allows BP to discharge 4,925 pounds of total suspended solids per day, up from 3,646 pounds per day, a 35 percent increase. This level of discharge is extremely disconcerting to me and the entire Great Lakes region.

Let me provide a little background information. The BP facility in Whiting was built in 1889 by John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company. Today, it is the fourth largest refinery in the country. It employs 1,700 people and supports another 1,500 contract workers in producing gasoline, diesel and jet fuel. It is a major, major refining operation not just in northwest Indiana, but, indeed, the entire Midwest.

BP plans to spend more than \$3 billion in upgrading and expanding the facility so it can process more heavy crude from Canada. I support the expansion of refinery capacity to help address our immediate and pressing need for fuel in the Midwest, but I know that the switch to refining more Canadian crude will inevitably lead to more waste from the facility.

No one is accusing BP of subverting the regulatory process. The permit went through the regular public comment period, although I must say that the time between the notice and the final issuance seems to me a very short period for a project of this magnitude. According to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, the permit was issued in full accordance and compliance with State and Federal environmental laws. If that is true, and I don't doubt that it is, there is something wrong with State and Federal environmental laws.

The benefits of this project should not come at the expense of our most precious natural resource. The Great Lakes are the world's largest freshwater system and serve as a source of drinking water, food, jobs and recreation for more than 40 million Americans. It is critical that we enhance our restoration efforts for this vital resource. It is already polluted enough, and we certainly do not want to degrade the condition of the lakes even further.

All the communities and States around the lakes have tried to improve their practices. My own town, my city of Grand Rapids, Michigan, has spent several hundred million dollars improving its wastewater treatment system to help clean up the lake, and that is the story in many cities around the lakes.

President Bush 2 years ago issued an Executive Order calling together the mayors and the Governors of the Great Lakes regions, the Members of Congress, the environmentalists and the tribes to work together to develop a solution to the pollution in the lakes. Over 1,500 policymakers and stakeholders came together in a collaborative process to develop a long-term strategic action plan for protecting and restoring the environmental health of the Great Lakes. I was proud to participate in that process as the congressional representative, and I have a bill in process which will make the collaborative's recommendations come into law.

The discharge of harmful pollutants that is proposed by BP and permitted by the State of Indiana is totally inconsistent with the goals of Great Lakes restoration. Ammonia and TSS, suspended solids, promote algae blooms that can suffocate fish, destroy fish habitat, deprive plants of sunlight and oxygen, and trigger beach closings. We cannot allow for more of these kinds of problems in the lake.

For these reasons, Madam Speaker, I would urge both the EPA and the State of Indiana to take a second look at this permit and find a better means of disposal. I also urge BP to look at other means of disposal. Certainly if they can afford to pipe crude oil from Canada thousands of miles through pipelines, they certainly should be able to find a better solution for disposal of wastes.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCOSKY), the distinguished chairman of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee.

Mr. VISCOSKY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I rise in support of the resolution.

Ever since the author Rachel Carson ushered in the advent of environmental awareness with her book "The Silent Spring," Americans have understood that we owe it to future generations to be good stewards of the planet and the environment. As in the case with every problem, we should work toward a solution not by asking how little must be done, but rather by asking what is the right thing to do?

As the chairman of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, I feel I have a unique perspective on the issues contained in this resolution.

□ 1045

As chairman of the Energy Subcommittee on Appropriations, I respect BP's foresight. Their investment of a half billion dollars, in collaboration with the University of California-Berkeley and the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana to increase energy production through renewable biofuels is a worthwhile goal. These fuels have the potential to increase our domestic

fuel capabilities and strengthen our national security by reducing our dependency on foreign oil.

As chairman of the Water Subcommittee on Appropriations, I also fully appreciate the treasure that is the Great Lakes system, including the potable, clean fresh drinking water, and its venues for recreation and refreshment. I also appreciate that the Federal Government has made a commitment to the Great Lakes States over several generations to improve water quality and reduce pollution.

It is my hope that, while it appears BP has the legal authority to potentially increase discharged materials into Lake Michigan, they will act responsibly, refrain from doing so, and reconsider their permit.

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 187.

Madam Speaker, throughout my career as a public servant, a principal advocacy of mine has always been to improve the quality of our precious Great Lakes, our magnificent Great Lakes, which are actually 20 percent of the fresh water supply of the entire planet. That is one-fifth of all of the fresh water in the entire world.

We have seen efforts at the local and State and Federal levels to prevent industrial pollution, to stop water diversion, to eliminate sewage discharges and to fight invasive species so that future generations can enjoy the beauty of our magnificent Great Lakes.

In fact, this House has passed many important bills that have helped make those goals a reality. And though we have made tremendous progress, there are still so many challenges facing the Great Lakes. We need to continue to fight to protect the Great Lakes.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, it seems not everyone shares this vision. As has been discussed, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management recently issued a wastewater permit to a British Petroleum refinery on the coast of Lake Michigan which will actually allow BP to increase the amount of ammonia and total suspended solids discharged into Lake Michigan. This is crazy. This is nuts.

This permit flies in the face of everything that we in this body, and numerous individuals in groups outside of this body, have attempted to achieve. Instead of increasing our efforts in creating more stringent regulations, this permit marks a huge step backwards in our efforts to keep our Great Lakes clean.

And although BP might argue that they have followed the law in this process to secure their permit, I would say it does not make their actions right.

The resolution before us expresses Congress's disapproval of this permit and urges the EPA to reject increased

dumping of chemicals and pollutants into our Great Lakes. This Congress must speak up for the Great Lakes. We owe it to our children, to our grandchildren, and for every generation that will follow. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI).

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution and in support of protecting one of America's most critical natural treasures, the Great Lakes. I thank Chairman OBERSTAR, Mr. EMANUEL, and Mr. EHLERS for their work on this issue in helping to protect the lakes.

Through Federal regulations and State and local cooperation, we have made great strides in cleaning up the Great Lakes. Right now we cannot step back. I am deeply troubled by BP's plan to significantly increase their dumping of ammonia and other pollutants into Lake Michigan. All of these pollutants can cause harm to the environment and to public health. Over 40 million people in the Chicago area get their drinking water from Lake Michigan, and it is critical to tourism, recreation and the fishing industry. We should not be doing less to protect the Great Lakes. We should be doing more, such as passing legislation I introduced with MARK KIRK to stop municipalities from dumping waste into the lakes.

While it is good to increase our national energy security and to create new jobs, this cannot come at the expense of public health and the quality of our environment. That is why BP must do everything possible to lower pollution emissions into Lake Michigan. BP talks the talk about protecting the environment. It is time for BP to walk the walk and protect the lake. The step forward today is to pass this resolution and send BP this message.

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, this issue extends throughout the entire United States in terms of its concern, and I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) as someone who lives very near this particular facility.

Mr. KIRK. I thank the gentleman and I want to thank Congressman EMANUEL and Congressman EHLERS for bringing this resolution to the floor.

Ten days ago, Michael Hawthorne of the Chicago Tribune broke the story that British Petroleum planned to increase its dumping into the source of our drinking water, Lake Michigan. It was a stunning mistake. BP, a pretend friend of the environment, should have not done this.

Tony Hayward, BP's chief, claims he is "Beyond Petroleum" when he plans to actually become a "Bad Polluter."

Governor Daniels of Indiana also made a big mistake. His State EPA failed in their duty to protect the public and authorized the first new dumping in the lake in a decade. Now 19 Republicans and Democrats joined with

Congressman LIPINSKI and me calling on the U.S. EPA to pull this permit; and 2,700 of my constituents signed the petition condemning BP's plan to increase its dumping in the lake.

Congressman LIPINSKI and I authored bipartisan legislation moving us to a time in which all dumping in the Great Lakes ends. Twenty-four billion gallons of raw sewage are dumped into the lake each year, and 12 billion gallons of raw sewage are dumped in the Great Lakes by the city of Detroit alone. But that is current dumping which should definitely end. We cannot allow new dumping by BP.

Later today we will meet with the head of BP North America, and given the legislative tsunami we are preparing, we should simply be discussing BP's terms of surrender on their lake-dumping plan. BP, millions spent in the "Beyond Petroleum" campaign, but we know it stands for "Bad Polluter." Hopefully, BP will back down and be a better partner in protecting Lake Michigan.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Let me just give you a few numbers here: 30 million, that's the number of people who depend on the Great Lakes for our drinking water; 20 percent, that's the percent of fresh surface water on the entire planet that is represented by the Great Lakes; \$6 billion, that's the amount of money that BP earned in the last quarter. BP is one of the most profitable companies on the entire planet, and a company that has spent a considerable amount of money promoting its green image.

I want to quote to you from a Chicago Tribune Voice of the People article that was written by a BP Whiting Refinery individual, and he talks about, he minimizes the problem. He says: "Of the 23 substances regulated in the permit, ammonia and total suspended solids are the only two limits that will increase when compared to the current permit." No problem, only two out of 23.

And later, consistent with BP's bragging about its environmental excellence says about itself: "This is just one of the ways we have demonstrated our focus on continual improvement in environmental performance. Our commitment to continuous improvement will carry on as we modernize the refinery." Meantime, increasing the amount of ammonia and the amount of total suspended solid waste.

What's the consequence of those emissions? The health consequences can't be understated. Dumping ammonia represents a direct threat to the health of millions of Americans living in the Great Lakes region. For example, ammonia in the water promotes algae blooms that can kill fish and trigger beach closings. So here is another number: 1,585 pounds of ammo-

nia, a 54-percent increase every day, every day into our precious Lake Michigan. And 4,925 pounds of liquid waste consisting of suspended particulate matter, a 35-percent increase every day into Lake Michigan.

In addition to putting our health at risk, the decision to allow BP to increase their dumpage also puts the lake ecosystem in jeopardy. Increasing the amount of liquid waste consisting of suspended particulate matter dumped into the lake each day endangers the marine life by making the water cloudy, thereby making it more difficult for fish to find ample amounts of oxygen.

This is a big deal. This is a serious problem, and it is incredible that the Environmental Protection Agency and BP and the State of Indiana would allow it. It is an outrage. We can stop it.

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to another member of the Fighting Illini, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM).

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, when you come here and represent the Great Lakes and you meet Representatives from all across the country, you meet folks from the east coast and the west coast, you begin having conversations about the water that surrounds their districts. I talk to Californians and people from Oregon and South Carolina, and they are very proud of their coastlines, as they should be. And as a Member who represents a Western district, you try and describe the Great Lakes to them, and it is really difficult to describe. And then you have someone come and visit and they look at Lake Michigan and they look at Lake Superior and Huron and Ontario and Lake Erie, and it takes their breath away because these are beautiful bodies of water.

Lake Michigan is so big and so significant that my almost entire congressional district gets its drinking water from Lake Michigan. So you can imagine the sense of pause and outrage and deep concern that many of us felt when we heard of this plan that BP had that was approved by the State of Indiana to move forward and dump these pollutants into Lake Michigan.

Madam Speaker, my district counts on the fact that drinking water is going to be as pure and clear as this cup when they open up the tap, and I think it is incumbent upon us on both sides of the aisle to stand today and to say this will not stand.

Madam Speaker, my predecessor, Congressman Hyde, had a great line. He said there is one thing worse than gridlock when it comes to government, and that is the greased chute of decision-making. Our role in Congress today is to stand up and to suggest and demand of the Environmental Protection Agency and demand of the State of Indiana that they rescind this order. With that, I am pleased to support the resolution.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY).

□ 1100

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concern regarding the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's decision to permit significant increases in allowable discharges of ammonia and total suspended solids into Lake Michigan, and I fully support H. Con. Res. 187.

For communities in my district, and I suspect most Americans, Lake Michigan is a national treasure. Not only does the lake serve as a source of drinking water and natural habitat and recreation, it is one of the greatest reminders of our responsibility to be good stewards of the environment.

One component in our strategy to achieve independence from foreign oil will need to be increased refining capacity here at home. I would like to support this project, but first, BP can do better and must do better. Their corporate image is marketed worldwide as an energy company seriously committed to providing modern energy solutions that value our environment; however, BP's wrong-headed decision here to increase discharges in a lake and in a region trying to overcome decades of environmental neglect will not stand.

I do not believe the health of our environment and the growth of our economy are mutually exclusive goals. My congressional district in Indiana features miles of beautiful Lake Michigan shoreline, Porter County, Michigan City, Long Beach. I note the next speaker, Congressman UPTON, whose district is next to mine, he has beautiful Lake Michigan shoreline and has done a great job protecting that resource, and I know he will do that again today.

The goals of energy independence and protection in the Great Lakes are not mutually exclusive. BP just has to conclude that they have to do this in the right way, and the right way is not to damage Lake Michigan.

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2½ minutes to a colleague from Michigan (Mr. UPTON).

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, I commend the remarks by my colleagues from every State that adjoins Lake Michigan, whether they be from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and obviously in my State, the great State of Michigan.

My district does abut Lake Michigan, and I'm a member of the Great Lakes Caucus, with a long record of protecting our Great Lakes body. The Great Lakes are the world's largest body of fresh water, and our job here is to be good stewards. We know that, and we were stunned by the announcement that was made just a little bit more than a week ago with regard to the new refinery that's being built and expanded in Indiana.

Tremendous efforts have been made in this region to protect the Great Lakes, but we see it in other places around the country, the Chesapeake Bay, and it's a disgrace that the mighty Potomac is in the shape that it is. We don't want the Great Lakes to take a step back. It needs to be improved. The last thing that we need to see is that the Great Lakes take a step back in terms of the protection that we have.

I travel in my district in southwest Michigan to Chicago quite a bit, and I can remember as a young boy going through Gary, Indiana, and some of those places there, and it was awful in terms of the pollution. And to their credit, they've done a much better job.

But I've got to say it's my understanding that for the State of Indiana to issue an exemption to its own State law that prohibits mixing zones is wrong. This will result in a serious setback in the efforts to clean up the Great Lakes, especially at a time when this outdated mixing zone practice is slated to be eliminated altogether, and yet we're seeing an exemption to have it continue. It, in essence, rolls back the clock for sound environmental policy.

Last week I picked up the phone and I called Governor Daniels of Indiana. I told him that we had a hornet's nest in southern Lake Michigan, and that they ought to reexamine exactly what the State of Indiana was allowing. The State of Indiana needs to reexamine this.

We don't want industrial waste to be increased. We don't want raw sewage to be increased. We've had our beaches closed enough. I don't care what side of the lake you live on, no new dumping ought to be the mandate that we impose on every municipality, every State in the Great Lakes. We should not be adding pollution. Instead, we should be subtracting to make sure that this resource stays a treasure for every family, for every community, for generations to come.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, how much time remains on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Minnesota has 6 minutes. The gentleman from Michigan has 6½ minutes.

Mr. OBERSTAR. We have one speaker remaining on our side. I would ask the gentleman to conclude.

Mr. EHLERS. I have one speaker, and then I would like to make some comments again.

Mr. OBERSTAR. So conclude with your two speakers, and then we'll conclude on our side.

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON).

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I cautiously come to the floor today, but I'm troubled by the process here.

I come from a Great Lakes State, Pennsylvania. We cherish the Great Lakes, but we're passing a resolution

today because of a newspaper article, a column, and we have legislation without any hearings. This is why we don't have refinery capacity in America.

In light of recent attention given to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's permit to the BP refinery, I would like to provide the facts and clear up misunderstandings, says the Department of Environmental Management in Indiana.

The BP wastewater permit was issued in accordance with State and Federal environmental laws which are protective of human health and environment. The State coordinated with EPA during the permitting process to ensure that the final permit was compliant with the Clean Water Act. On April 5, 2007, EPA issued a letter that they had no objections to the permit being issued pursuant to the Clean Water Act.

There are many inaccuracies in the recent media reports. They have given no exceptions to environmental conditions for this facility. The wastewater treatment permit meets all State laws and regulations that apply to the facility and project. Many of the limits placed in the permit are actually more protective than required by Federal law.

We need to deal with these issues with the facts, not newspaper reports. We can't build refineries in America. We blame the refineries. This happens every time they try.

I'm not for pollution in Lake Erie, but I would like to have had a hearing where Indiana could have had its case heard. We shouldn't be here on the floor debating this with very little knowledge and hysteria.

The future of refining in America, the future of energy availability in America, we must have clean water and clean air, but if we are going to have a political reaction without the hearings, without the information, we shouldn't make these kind of decisions on the floor of the House.

I'm for cleaning up the Great Lakes. I have a bill on the outer continental shelf to produce natural gas that will give \$21 billion to Great Lakes cleanup. That's a bill that will help us get rid of the sludge of the past.

I just wish this wasn't before us without adequate process and hearings so we could understand what's really happened there, where we have a real knowledge of information, because we desperately need the capacity they're talking about.

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I will be pleased to offer some comments to close, particularly in view of the previous speaker.

As I said in my earlier comments, I emphasized I was not condemning British Petroleum for their actions; although, I wish they had taken the lead in demonstrating the environmentalism that they often advertise that they have. But I do deplore that the State of

Indiana was willing to give them a permit. I do deplore that the Environmental Protection Agency was willing to give them a permit.

This is contrary to everything that we have been trying to do to clean up the Great Lakes, at huge expense. All over the Great Lakes, communities have tried to clean it up, and my preference would be not only that BP does not add to the load they're putting in the lake, I would prefer that they say, we're going to find a different method, and we're not even going to dump in the lake what we're dumping in now, because they are already dumping a substantial amount in.

The goal here is not to drive BP away. It's not to stop the refinery project. I'd emphasize that over and over. The goal is to make sure that we can maintain the purity and cleanliness of the Great Lakes. And Lake Michigan, of course, drains into three of the other Great Lakes and with a smattering going into Lake Superior. So this is a very important issue.

The gentleman talked a minute ago about drinking water out of the lakes. Forty million Americans draw their water out of the Great Lakes, their drinking water. That is a huge number of people. We are very worried about cleaning up the mercury that already exists in the lake, also the toxaphene and other contaminants, because people are drinking that water, and they are getting ill.

The goal here is not to stop BP. The goal here is to make certain they find an alternative method of disposing of the ammonia and the total suspended solids that they are proposing to dump in the lake, and I would hope they also, while they're doing that, stop dumping what they are dumping, and make sure all the ammonia, all of the total suspended solids get disposed of elsewhere. Perhaps they can use a waste landfill, perhaps something else, but certainly we do not want them to be dumping any additional contaminants into the Great Lakes system.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

We're not here reacting to and debating a newspaper story. The report of the planned dumping of highly toxic, highly residual elements into Lake Michigan has been documented. We will have a hearing in the Subcommittee on Water Resources in due course, but this is an emergency that called out and cried out for immediate action to lay a line down in front of the State of Indiana and British Petroleum to let them know that their proposed indifference, slap in the face, to clean water, this precious resource, will not be tolerated by the American public.

They will go ahead and build their refinery, but on that property, they have plenty of room for appropriate disposal of these wastes. They ought to know, they ought to understand, water is more precious than oil.

The slow flushing action of Lake Michigan, it'll be 300 years before water turns over in that lake. It means that whatever they put in that lake is going to stay there for generations to come. They know that. So does the State of Indiana. Protect that lake.

There are alternatives to dumping every colossal waste that industry can sum up into the lake. There are other alternatives. They have to explore those alternatives.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the bill pending before us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of our time to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, there's a sad irony on this decision by British Petroleum, and that is, 10 years ago, 1997, when I was working in the White House, we had made a decision and Geolyse standards were negotiated at that point, coming on line just about now. It took all of the States, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Illinois, to set standards, as also the other States supported the Great Lakes, about polluting and what was allowed and permissible to pollute on the lakes and what wasn't. And those Geolyse standards that brought everybody together 10 years ago and started this movement to protect our Great Lakes in a way that we had not seen since the Clean Water Act, that negotiation and the product of that negotiation was just coming on line right now.

And just at that moment, we have this decision by British Petroleum, which is the most significant dumping in Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes and Lake Michigan since basically we started the Clean Water Act and reversing the trend of using the lake as nothing but a dumping ground.

Now, if this can happen in Lake Michigan, it can happen in other Great Lakes, which is why other Members of other delegations have stepped forward, and I want to repeat, all that British Petroleum has to do here is they have the technology to actually take a different course here. It's about the size of a land mass that they have to acquire, and if you look again at Google Map, they have plenty of land, 1,600 acres, to do what's right.

So many decisions we face on the environment are about jobs and the environment. You can both double the size of the refinery, create those 80 jobs, and also preserve our national commitment to the clean water of Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes. It's not an either/or choice.

And what's so sad about the rush here is that this is a decision that could easily be won, that's a victory for British Petroleum, doubling the

size of their refinery, but not doubling the size of the ammonia that's dumped into Lake Michigan and not increasing the amount of both mercury and other metals that are going to be untreated, dumped into Lake Michigan, and then we're all going to be asked to increase the money to clean up what they could have done in the beginning.

They're spending \$3.8 billion. For a fraction, they could actually not only increase the refinery, but increase the capacity to treat these chemicals, and then we're all going to be asked to increase the money to clean up Lake Michigan with something that never should have happened and hasn't happened for 10 years.

□ 1115

Now, this unusual unity here is because all of us have constituents that don't regard this as a party issue, a partisan issue; they regard it as a commitment. We have had a tremendous increase in the consciousness of folks about the importance of Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes to the environment.

If this was the Grand Canyon or Yellowstone, there would be no question. Lake Michigan, Ontario, Superior, Erie and all the Great Lakes are the Midwest's national parks. They stand as the largest body of fresh water in North America. Twenty percent of the world's entire fresh water is right there.

It is America's third coast. We would never consider doing this to any other national treasure. BP should not consider it here. They can double the size of the refinery, which is a good thing; they can increase employment by 80 jobs, a good thing; and they can be true to their advertising, "Beyond Petroleum," and being the most green energy company if they decide to take the right actions. We'll help them if they want to do that.

But to act intransigent, like they have, is wrong. We are going to be meeting with the North American executive this afternoon. I know the Illinois delegation is. We are going to meet with them to let them know that they have a choice here to live up to their word.

I want to again thank all of my colleagues for stepping forward and giving a voice to their constituents who are outraged across the area with the decision by British Petroleum to do something no other company has decided to do in the last 10 years and reverse the standards and the progress we have made on the environmental quality of our Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 187, which expresses the sense of Congress regarding the dumping of industrial waste into the Great Lakes. My colleague RAHM EMANUEL has introduced this resolution, as has my colleague from the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. EHLERS of Michigan. The resolution has 18 cosponsors from across the Great Lakes region.

It is my understanding that a recent decision by Indiana state regulators will allow the British Petroleum company to dump more ammonia and suspended solids daily into Lake Michigan. Although I do agree that our country needs to work on finding additional materials and sources for energy, and we do need to create jobs to help our economy, I do not believe British Petroleum's plan takes our nation in the right direction. As a society, we need to protect our already endangered waters, for they provide means to run our businesses, fulfill daily chores, and relax.

Improving the state of the Great Lakes is not an antiquated policy goal from the last century; rather, we still fight today to improve these waters. The House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, which I chair, continues to pursue the problems of invasive species, low water levels, and pollutants entering the Lakes on a regular basis. We do not need to add additional waste to our struggling, yet essential, waters.

I urge my colleagues to join with me and vote in favor of this resolution.

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution before us. Recently, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management granted BP's Whiting refinery in Indiana broad exceptions under the Clean Water Act. These exemptions will allow BP to increase the amount of discharge of ammonia by 54 percent and its discharge of total suspended solids by 35 percent. This means that an additional 1,584 pounds of ammonia and 4,925 pounds of total suspended solids could be dumped into Lake Michigan.

This is simply unacceptable and I thank my colleagues from Illinois and Michigan for bringing the resolution to the floor with the utmost speed. I am dismayed, Madam Speaker. Dismayed that the State of Indiana issued the permits and further dismayed EPA allowed the State to do so.

Algae blooms, Madam Speaker, are serious business. Algae blooms, which can be caused by ammonia and total suspended solids, overtake native ecosystems by taking nutrients away from the surrounding plant life and also feed harmful bacteria which remove oxygen, killing aquatic life. This leads to poor water quality and beach closings. Instead of taking action to increase algae blooms, we should be taking action to decease them.

According to BP, the company intends to install a diffuser to create a "mixing zone"—mixing zones are areas where clean water gets mixed with polluted water to further dilute the concentration of pollutants. In 2000, EPA instituted a rule requiring the elimination of existing mixing zones for persistent and bio-accumulative pollution in all the Great Lakes States. The rule required the phase-out of current mixing zones by 2010 and does not allow any new zones to be created. The expansion of the BP facility is not scheduled to be finished until 2011. The exemptions essentially roll back the clock for sound environmental policy.

Madam Speaker, those of us from the region have a unique appreciation for the Great Lakes, as we are quite literally surrounded by them. The lakes are a blessing to us. We owe our tourism industry to the Great Lakes—where people come from around the country to recreate, hunt, fish and relax. The lakes as a transportation system provided Michigan and the surrounding States with the means to turn our region into a manufacturing powerhouse.

At a time when Congress is finally taking a long-overdue look into a broad restoration and conservation plan for the Great Lakes, the State of Indiana is allowing more pollution into the lakes. And EPA—the lead Agency in Great Lakes Regional Collaboration—is allowing it. This, Madam Speaker, is exactly the opposite of what we should be doing. Instead, restoring and protecting the Great Lakes must be a priority.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the resolution and again thank my friends, the gentleman from Illinois and the gentleman from Michigan, for bringing it up.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 187.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 558 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3074.

□ 1120

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3074) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, with Mr. WEINER (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Monday, July 23, 2007, a request for a recorded vote on the amendment by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) had been postponed and the bill had been read through page 67, line 2.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

HOUSING CERTIFICATE FUND
(RESCISSION)

Of the unobligated balances, including recaptures and carryover, remaining from funds appropriated to the Department of Housing and Urban Development under this heading, the heading "Annual Contributions for Assisted Housing", the heading "Tenant-Based Rental Assistance", and the heading "Project-Based Rental Assistance", for fiscal

year 2007 and prior years, \$1,300,000,000 is rescinded, to be effected by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development no later than September 30, 2008: *Provided*, That if insufficient funds exist under these headings, the remaining balance may be derived from any other heading under this title: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall notify the Committees on Appropriations 30 days in advance of the rescission of any funds derived from the headings specified above: *Provided further*, That any such balances governed by reallocation provisions under the statute authorizing the program for which the funds were originally appropriated shall be available for the rescission: *Provided further*, That any obligated balances of contract authority from fiscal year 1974 and prior that have been terminated shall be cancelled.

PROJECT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For activities and assistance for the provision of project-based subsidy contracts under the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437 et seq.) ("the Act"), not otherwise provided for, \$6,479,810,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That the amounts made available under this heading are provided as follows:

(1) Up to \$6,239,122,000 for expiring or terminating section 8 project-based subsidy contracts (including section 8 moderate rehabilitation contracts), for amendments to section 8 project-based subsidy contracts (including section 8 moderate rehabilitation contracts), for contracts entered into pursuant to section 441 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11401), for renewal of section 8 contracts for units in projects that are subject to approved plans of action under the Emergency Low Income Housing Preservation Act of 1987 or the Low-Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act of 1990, and for administrative and other expenses associated with project-based activities and assistance funded under this paragraph.

(2) Not less than \$238,728,000 but not to exceed \$286,230,000 for performance-based contract administrators for section 8 project-based assistance: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may also use such amounts for performance-based contract administrators for: interest reduction payments pursuant to section 236(a) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1715z-1(a)); rent supplement payments pursuant to section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965 (12 U.S.C. 1701s); section 236(f)(2) rental assistance payments (12 U.S.C. 1715z-1(f)(2)); project rental assistance contracts for the elderly under section 202(c)(2) of the Housing Act of 1959 (12 U.S.C. 1701q); project rental assistance contracts for supportive housing for persons with disabilities under section 811(d)(2) of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 8013(d)(2)); project assistance contracts pursuant to section 202(h) of the Housing Act of 1959 (Public Law 86-372; 73 Stat. 667); and loans under section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 (Public Law 86-372; 73 Stat. 667).

(3) \$1,960,000 shall be transferred to the Working Capital Fund.

(4) Amounts recaptured under this heading, the heading "Annual Contributions for Assisted Housing", or the heading "Housing Certificate Fund" may be used for renewals of or amendments to section 8 project-based contracts or for performance-based contract administrators, notwithstanding the purposes for which such amounts were appropriated.