

EARTH DAY

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

trustees; as a trustee for North Carolina State University, the North Carolina Museum of Art and the Wake Education Partnership; as Chairman of the Wake County Coalition for the Homeless; and as a director of Capital Bank, a community bank headquartered in Raleigh.

Most recently, Vernon served in the North Carolina General Assembly representing the state's 14th Senate district and was reelected three times. In the State Senate, he continued to work on education. He was co-chairman of the Senate's Higher Education Committee and Appropriations Committee for Higher Education.

Vernon Malone rose to prominence during a time when prejudice ran high. Rather than succumb to intolerance, he was able to rise above it. I am glad that he was able to witness the inauguration of President Barack Obama earlier this year. It was Vernon and his contemporaries who made it possible for our nation to eventually elect an African American President.

Madam Speaker, Senator Vernon Malone had a commitment to excellence in everything he did. He was a respected legislator, a dedicated public servant, and a great North Carolinian. It is fitting that we honor him and his family today.

CELEBRATING EARTH DAY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, the Los Angeles basin holds one of the greatest concentrations of humanity in the world. People have come from all over the Earth to live there—when one walks down a street in Glendale or Alhambra one can hear a language from ten thousand miles away on one block and read signs in a vastly different language on the next. But if you look up a little higher, above the signs and above the buildings, you'll see grey-green mountains looking down on it all. In my district, we're right up against the Verdugo, Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains, and they surprise you all the time, appearing at street corners from behind the buildings, playing hide-and-seek with intervening hills and highways.

Though few of my constituents live up there, I try to get up into the hills as often as I can, and I'm often surprised by how many of my neighbors I run into on the trail. I think that, like me, they wander in the chaparral and oak forests to get away for a while, and find some perspective in the process. Among the families, teenagers and retirees I pass, I see all of the cultures I know from the streets of my district, all enjoying the fact that they can find some peace and quiet just a few minutes away from one of the largest cities in the world.

Our green spaces play an irreplaceable role in our communities, and on this Earth Day, I would like to celebrate them. This is a day to think globally, but it is also a day to act locally, by taking your family to the park and exploring all that you find there. In the words of John Muir, "When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world."

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about Earth Day which as you know is being celebrated in communities throughout our country and around the world today.

I can't begin any conversation about Earth Day without talking about Wisconsin's former governor and U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson, who was the driving force behind this important event.

I don't mean to boast but I don't think its coincidental that Wisconsin has been the birthplace of many prominent figures in the environmental movement and who helped shaped the environmental laws that have helped to create.

Wisconsinites have long recognized the need to be stewards of the environment. It's common sense when you grow up next to one of the largest sources of freshwater on the planet.

Gaylord Nelson is certainly one of those environmental champions of whom our state is proud and whose record of advocacy and accomplishment around the environment has not only impacted our nations, but the world. Earth Day is but one example of that.

He is rightly noted and celebrated for his role in the first "Earth Day" event which took place some 39 years ago.

But that is not where his involvement in the environmental movement began and not where it ended either. Before it was popular to be an environmentalist, Senator Nelson was working to make sure our nation's air, water, and natural resources were protected.

Senator Nelson was a mover and shaker not just in creating Earth Day but in starting the movement to bring the protection of our air, water, and public lands to the center of national attention and policy, not just an afterthought.

According to Senator Nelson, his efforts to create what is now Earth Day began in the early 1960s when he became troubled "that the state of our environment was simply a non-issue in the politics of the country."

In 1962, he approached the Kennedy Administration with an idea about how to shift the political spotlight to the need for better and pro-environment laws and policies.

He helped convince President Kennedy to undertake a national conservation tour to draw attention to the issue. While the President did the tour, according to Senator Nelson, "For many reasons the tour did not succeed in putting the issue onto the national political agenda. However, it was the germ of the idea that ultimately flowered into Earth Day."

This has probably been one of the most successful grassroots movements ever as today millions of Americans and millions more around the world are organizing in their communities at river and park cleanup events, planting trees and gardens, and other actions to promote environmental awareness, with the simple message: We ignore the damage being done to our environment at our own peril.

Over 3,000 people were out in force in my district on Saturday to clean rivers and streams throughout the area.

Since the First Earth Day, we have seen the passage of legislation strengthening the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency, the passage of the Endangered Species Act, and other steps.

Yet, the battle continues. Our environment continues to face threats from pollution. Rising greenhouse gas emissions and climate change will present their own challenge.

Water shortages and droughts not only in our own country but around the world are of great concern. Just today, another report was released showing that rivers in some of the world's most populated regions are losing water, many because of climate change according to researchers.

We could all continue to live without oil, but we can't live without clean water.

The battle to keep invasive species out of our nation's waters will also continue. In the Great Lakes alone, it is estimated that over 180 non-native species have taken hold in the Great Lakes and on average, a new species is discovered every nine months or so.

I was pleased to be at an event yesterday in celebration of Earth Day where I had the chance to address high school students from my district about the importance of the environment and clean water.

It is future generations that stand to lose the most if we do not continue to make the protection and preservation of our environment a priority. This is what Senator Nelson and others understood so well back then. It is what is incumbent on us all, including policymakers, to understand today.

This Congress has a number of efforts underway to ensure that we continue environmental protection remains a prominent place in federal policy.

Senator Nelson was one of the authors of the Wilderness Act of 1964 which authorized the federal government to protect forever areas of our forests with unspoiled and untrammeled wilderness qualities.

Earlier this year, Congress passed by strong bipartisan margins the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2008 (H.R. 146) which would provide wilderness protection to over 2 million acres of federal lands. Senator Nelson would be proud.

The House has also passed legislation—Water Quality Investment Act—reauthorizing the Clean Water State Revolving Fund program which is critical to clean water efforts because it helps pay for building and improving wastewater treatment facilities in our nation's communities.

A number of other important pieces of legislation including a bill to address climate change and another to restore protections to our waterways granted by the Clean Water Act that have been undermined by various court rulings are pending.

Our nation owes Senator Nelson a great deal of appreciation. As we celebrate Earth Day, let us renew our commitment as individuals and as a Congress to continuing to pursue policies that will ensure that our nation's air, water, and natural resources remain a priority and remain protected for future generations to come.

COMMEMORATING EARTH DAY

EARTH DAY 2009

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 39th annual Earth Day celebration. While our Nation is facing many other important and difficult challenges, I think it is incredibly important that we take this day to reflect on the status of our environment and how each of us affects it individually. Little decisions made in our own daily lives snowball into large changes that have tremendous impact—a fact worth remembering.

Earth Day founder and Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson is the perfect example of just how great an impact one person can have. Born in the small town of Clear Lake in northwest Wisconsin, Sen. Nelson went on to become governor of the state and then U.S. Senator. He founded Earth Day in 1970 to put pressing environmental issues on the national political map. Now, 39 years later, Earth Day is celebrated in 175 countries, helping motivate and mobilize hundreds of millions of people to commit to better environmental practices and policies.

Not all of us can have this same kind of global influence, but Earth Day's message of collective action means that each of us has a role in preserving our world for future generations, one step at a time. For instance, if each of us simply replaces one incandescent light bulb with a compact fluorescent bulb, we would prevent the annual emission of greenhouse gases equal to those of 2 million. We also would save enough electricity to shut down two dirty coal power plants. At the same time, American families would save money, as CFL bulbs use 75 percent less electricity than traditional bulbs—a win-win for the environment and the consumer.

In recent years we have witnessed countless other examples of individuals making decisions that help them go green. For example, Wisconsin leads the nation in anaerobic digesters, which take livestock manure and convert it into biogas that produces clean, renewable energy. Additionally, schools across our state have been able to save on their energy costs and help us meet our carbon management goals by utilizing biomass energy projects. These are just two ways people in my district and my state are doing their part.

On this Earth Day, as I recognize and applaud the actions of countless people around the world, I also challenge each of us to continue our efforts. We must take additional steps to meet our shared environmental challenges and to leave this world a healthy, vibrant, and beautiful place for generations to come.

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. REICHERT. Madam Speaker, almost forty years ago today, what was an idea to spread awareness about our environment has become global recognition and awareness of the importance of protecting the Earth. Earth Day began in 1970, when 20 million people participated across the U.S.

Earth Day has grown into a global tradition, with a billion people expected to take part this year in 180 nations around the world.

It is a movement that succeeds because of the passion of each individual, realizing that there's something bigger than ourselves—that what each of us contribute can make a difference in our world, and on our environment.

In Washington State, we take special pride in our natural resources, and I'm proud to follow in the footsteps of so many in our great State who have worked together to protect the outdoors and our environment.

One of the popular, natural glories of my Congressional district in Washington State is the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, a 362,000 acre wilderness that sits just west of the Seattle metropolitan area. Just over a week ago, I joined the senior Senator from Washington State to discuss our recently introduced legislation to designate over 22,000 acres of additional wilderness and institute federal protection for two pristine rivers in my district. Our new legislation will expand the boundary of the existing Alpine Lakes wilderness area to embrace important lower-elevation lands, and establish Wild and Scenic designations for the Pratt and parts of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Rivers.

Earth Day brings an excitement to the movement of protecting our environment, but we need to take the Earth Day movement from single-day actions—such as park clean-ups and tree-planting parties—to longterm commitments in our everyday lives. Whether that is supporting legislation, or making small changes to be more environmentally conscious, each is equally important. These commitments will make a difference for our children and the generations to come.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH
ANNIVERSARY OF CRISISLINK

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, it is my great honor to rise today to recognize an outstanding organization serving Northern Virginia. CrisisLink is a community-based nonprofit dedicated to crisis prevention, intervention, and response. Since its founding in 1969, CrisisLink has evolved to become an invaluable resource to our communities.

Originally founded as a hotline for Arlington teens, CrisisLink was incorporated in February

1970 as the around-the-clock Northern Virginia Hotline. Just ten years ago, the name of the organization was changed to reflect the extended mission and range of services that CrisisLink has continued to provide. CrisisLink now has the ability to refer callers to over 4,400 resources located in Northern Virginia that can help callers address the problems and situations affecting their lives.

CrisisLink is experiencing a huge increase in demand for its services. Over the past twelve months, the volume of suicide-related calls has increased by 60% when compared to the twelve month period immediately prior and increased by 150% when compared to five years ago. CrisisLink's hotlines are staffed for sixteen hours every day by highly trained volunteers. These volunteers contribute over 15,000 hours of service every year. Virginia Hospital Center provides in-kind contributions totaling over \$500,000 each year including providing \$50,000 worth of space for programs.

Although CrisisLink is often noted for its role as a suicide and crisis intervention hotline, it also provides a number of programs that extend its reach throughout the community. CrisisLink added a 2-1-1 number to serve as a central number to help connect those in need with information on community resources and health and human services. The 2-1-1 call volume has increased by 50% since July 2008. Over 30,000 calls to the CrisisLink hotline and the 2-1-1 number will be answered this year alone.

CrisisLink's programs are estimated to save the Greater Washington region over \$4,320,000 in ambulance, police, 9-1-1, hospital, and follow-up costs by preventing suicide attempts throughout the region. This financial savings multiplies as localities are able to apply these saved resources to greater preventative and proactive measures.

The Tara Sirmans Survivor HOPE program was launched in September 2006. The Help and Outreach for Prevention and Education (HOPE) program works with families and loved ones to help them as they struggle with the intense grief experienced following a suicide or other form of sudden and traumatic loss. Through peer support, workshops, and survivor support groups, the HOPE program works to assist families and friends through the most difficult of situations.

In 2008, Washingtonian Magazine recognized CrisisLink as one of the top charities in the Washington region. CrisisLink was also the recipient of the first ever "National Award for Crisis Center Excellence" for its works responding to the September 11th attack on the Pentagon.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the contributions of CrisisLink over its 40 years of existence. CrisisLink saves lives and prevents tragedies. Perhaps someday our society will no longer need services such as CrisisLink, but until that day, we are grateful for their selfless and critical service. I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the dedicated staff and volunteers who are so deserving of our recognition for their commitment to helping those in their time of need.