

years without adverse health effects—this “Health Advisory” is much lower than the EPA guideline. Yet, the city of Columbus, OH found that compliance with this regulation could require a new \$80 million water purification plant. For the same amount of money, the city could hire an extra 2,300 teachers at the average State teacher’s salary. We must remember that protecting our environment has real costs and that we cannot squander those resources on minimal threat, extreme cost environmental boondoggles.

Another thing that we, as Americans, cannot tolerate in our environmental trek, is a cumbersome bureaucracy that makes environmental protection difficult to attain. The Endangered Species Act first passed with strong bipartisan support, all of us can agree that we should not be willfully trying to eradicate the creatures important to our ecosystem. However, the two pronged efforts of the act, protection and recovery, have become stymied in bureaucracy and court cases so that many species have become protected, but very few species have been recovered at all. This undermines the real intention of the law.

But as bad as the bureaucracy has been with the Endangered Species Act, the Superfund Program has been worse. This program, which was put into law 16 years ago to clean our Nation’s worst toxic dumps, has been a miserable failure; it is the archetypical government program. Everyone believes this program needs to be reformed. We have spent billions of dollars on this program only to see hazardous waste sites sit uncleaned, with lawyers and bureaucrats drawing ever-increasing paychecks. The American people deserve a much better return on their investment. I have successfully offered an amendment to congressional efforts to reform Superfund that would force greater amounts of the Superfund’s cleanup budget—the money that should be going to “dirt moving” activity, not bureaucrats, desks, and reams of studies—to go to site remediation. The private sector generally spends over 200 percent less on administrative costs in cleanup projects than the Government. The money we save here could be used for tangible environmental improvements and I am hopeful that this important provision can be enacted into public law.

Our country has made significant strides over the last 30 years to make our environment safer, cleaner, and healthier. We should not abdicate the responsibility to protect our air, land, and water that has been established and been successful. However, we should not forget to reform or improve those laws that have actually perpetuated the problems. More of a bad thing does not make it a good thing, it only becomes a bigger bad thing—and delay is worse. This should be our credo in finding environmental problems, as well as in proposing their solutions. Trying something new, or looking at the problem in another way, does not immediately constitute an infringement on environmental protection, we all want a clean environment.

Mr. Speaker, much of the public debate on the environment has been cast in purely partisan tones, yet, I am here to set the record straight that making our natural inheritance better for present and future generations should not be confined to party identification. If we were to keep score from that perspective, as most people do in this town, I would like to remind people that the Republicans

were the first ones to embrace the cause of conservation. Teddy Roosevelt, the first real standard bearer for the National Park System, was a Republican. And, the Environmental Protection Agency was established by Richard Nixon and would have been elevated to Cabinet-level status under President Bush had certain political considerations not come to the fore.

Our environment is too important to become a political football, filled with hot air every election cycle. Emotional pleas and incendiary direct mail pieces only clutter the burgeoning waste stream of environmental perspectives. We need a science-based policy which gives us solid, substantiated information; governing by fearmongering is no way to responsibly lead. Using informed, expert opinion and legitimate data, we can make our natural inheritance better for present and future generations.

I am hopeful that this Earth Day will be an opportunity for us all to consider the environment and how we can make it better. Billions of tax dollars are spent to ensure our public health and safety, they should not fund unreasonable regulations or stifling bureaucracies. We should take a prudent, realistic course, that realizes we are currently able to accomplish a finite set of objectives, as our resources allow. And, we should see that local involvement in priority setting, on top of proven and substantiated research, lead us to environmental quality in which we can all take pride.

THE 26TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION
OF EARTH DAY

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 1996

Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked the 26th Annual celebration of Earth Day. In the time since the first Earth Day, much has been accomplished in to the way of environmental protection. Landmark legislation such as the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species, Act, and the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency have resulted from a commitment to protection of our natural resources that is exemplified by Earth Day.

There is no question that today our water is more clean and our air is more breathable than it was 25 years ago. Species that were threatened or endangered 25 years ago, such as the American Bald Eagle, are now thriving. Wetlands are better protected, toxic dump sites are more quickly identified and treated, environmentally sensitive sources of energy are being developed and put into use, and our public lands are more sensitively preserved and maintained.

The job is certainly not complete. Much can be done to strengthen the laws on the books, but much can be done to make compliance with those laws more achievable. Long-term environmental protection can only be accomplished through a partnership between the environmental and business communities. In seeking to expand and improve environmental protection, we must also consider the legitimate concerns raised by those who live with the regulations.

Despite all the positive and popular steps that have been taken to protect the environ-

ment in the past quarter century, and the additional work that needs to be done, the leadership of the 104th Congress has attempted to halt, roll back, and eliminate many of the protections for the environment we hold sacred. Legislation has passed the House during this Congress to dramatically reduce one of the most successful laws on our books, the Clean Water Act. While not perfect, the Clean Water Act has gone a long way towards cleaning up our Nation’s rivers, lakes, and streams; but the bill that passed the House rejects those successes and represents a major step backward in cleanup of polluted waterways.

Another target of this Congress has been the Environmental Protection Agency. In pursuit of a worthy cause—streamlining and making more efficient the environmental regulatory process—legislation has passed the House to establish stringent new requirements for risk assessment and cost benefit analysis of major federal regulations affecting health, safety, or the environment. Should this bill become law, it would hamstring EPA’s ability to promulgate and enforce regulations designed to protect the environment.

In addition, funding for EPA has been slashed by more than 25 percent. The House Leadership’s commitment to reducing environmental protection funding has resulted in fewer hazardous waste cleanups, a reduction in enforcement, and a decrease in needed water infrastructure and treatment programs.

Today, as we celebrate the 26th anniversary of Earth Day, it is important to reflect on the successes that have been achieved in environmental protection over the years, and the work that must continue to be done to ensure our natural resources will be preserved for generations to come. Instead of misguided attempts to roll back protection, we need to develop ways to preserve our environment that are cost-effective, efficient, and responsible.

I participated in the first Earth Day celebration in 1970 by walking to my teaching job rather than driving, and discussing with my students the responsibility each individual has to the environment. I have marked the anniversary of Earth Day each year since, and this year I helped to create a community garden with Americorps volunteers in my district.

All of my life I have worked for sound environment, and I practice conservation and recycling at home and in my offices. As a member of the Transportation Committee’s Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, and the Science Committee’s Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, I work as an advocate for substantive changes in law and policy that will ensure a quality environment.

Concern about our environment must be reflected in each of our lives daily. From recycling our newspapers, to planting trees, to using public transportation whenever possible, together we can make our environment cleaner and safer. Let us each pledge to make every day, Earth Day.

COMMEMORATION OF THE
OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING

HON. VIC FAZIO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 1996

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Oklahoma City

bombing and to pay tribute to those who lost their lives or loved ones as a result of the bombing of the Federal building at Oklahoma City.

On such a solemn occasion it is difficult to find the words which accurately express my sorrow and my outrage. My heart goes out in full to the innocent men, women, and children who were robbed of their lives or permanently wounded in this savage attack just 1 year ago. I also extend my deepest sympathies to the victims families and loved one's, who have suffered such loss.

On this day, I must restate my commitment to preventing such acts of terror from ever happening again. By learning from this tragedy, we ensure that those who died did not do so in vain. The time has come to adopt a new vigilance. While nothing will bring back the lost lives, justice must be upheld. We will do everything possible to ensure that the perpetrators of this act do not escape punishment.

A year has gone by and still the memory of this horrific day is embedded in our minds as if it occurred yesterday.

While I am pleased to see the people of Oklahoma City rebuilding both their city and their lives, I realize that their wounds still run very deep. I urge them to continue pushing forward. Their strength and unity throughout this crisis serves as an example for us all.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO AUTHORIZE THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

HON. WES COOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 1996

Mr. COOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to provide for a 6-year "clean authorization" for the Bureau of Land Management [BLM]. The Bureau of Land Management is the only agency in the Department of Interior that is not permanently authorized. Since 1982, the BLM has been operating without an authorization forcing the Appropriations Committee to do the work of the authorizing committee.

Chairman DON YOUNG of the Resources Committee, Chairman HANSEN of the authorizing subcommittee, Chairman RALPH REGULA of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, and I are introducing this bill that will authorize the BLM. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 [FLPMA] requires the reauthorization of the BLM, but due to political wrangling, the BLM is without an authorization.

Last Congress, under the leadership of Congressman BRUCE VENTO, a bipartisan effort passed a 2-year clean authorization that made it through the House. This bill is adding onto that effort and will go one step farther and provide the BLM with a clean 6-year authorization.

This clean authorization will provide the agency with the ability to conduct long-term planning and make the management decisions

necessary to properly care for more than 270 million acres under BLM control.

I would urge my colleagues to support this clean authorization.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE STUDENTS AT AMADOR VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 1996

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the students in Mr. Skip Mohatt's civics class at Amador Valley High School in Pleasanton, CA. These students recently placed first in Sacramento, CA, to win the statewide "We the People" civics class competition.

Amador Valley High School and Mr. Mohatt have had a long history of success in this competition. This is the third year in a row that Amador Valley High Students have come in first and the fourth time in 5 years that they have won the State title. Last year, Amador Valley High School was the national champion. I want to commend Mr. Mohatt and his students for this extraordinary achievement and to wish the class luck. They are here to defend their national championship title in 2 weeks.

I would like to take this opportunity to mention the students by name, in alphabetical order, the 1996 California State champions are: Evan Anderson, Jamie Bartlett, Matthew Brehm, Jarold Bunas, MacKenzie Bundgard, Erin Callahan, Michael Campbell, Ryan Darst, Leah Dellanini, Chad Duffy, Heather Erskine, Jared Fixmer, Michelle Gilbert, Kristin Johnson, Erin Kettwig, Beatrice Korbil, Jason Lew, David Loughnot, Abimbola Majekodunmi, Christina Nystrom, Tina O'Keefe, Angie Picco, Bill Reaugh, Joseph Sabbagh, Olivia Sanwong, Christine Splitt, Paula Tee, Randall Wat, Eric Willett, and Katrine Wilson.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that you and my colleagues will join me in congratulating these students on their recent first place finish and to wish them luck in the upcoming competition.

COMMEMORATION OF RADIO VI- SION AND ITS 15TH ANNUAL VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION DAY

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 1996

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, on May 4, 1996, Radio Vision, a service organization in my 20th Congressional District of New York which is staffed entirely by volunteers will celebrate its 15th annual "Volunteer Recognition Day."

Radio Vision provides day-to-day information and local news to those who are most in

need of it. A visually handicapped person's access to the media is limited to radio and TV broadcasts which primarily focus on national and world news stories. For someone that has difficulty holding or reading a newspaper, local news and information—such as stories which are having sales, new facilities opening in the vicinity and the accomplishments of our neighbors—are difficult to obtain.

Radio Vision is a closed-circuit radio broadcasting service that provides news and information free of charge to blind and sight-impaired individuals throughout four counties in the Hudson Valley region of New York. Its volunteers read local news, topical literature, shopping hints, and other vital information to the more than 400 blind, sight-impaired or otherwise disabled Hudson Valley residents who subscribe to the Radio Vision service.

One hundred and five volunteers contributed their time and talents this past year to make Radio Vision a success. These volunteers are highly deserving of our gratitude and special recognition. Without their efforts, sight-impaired people would have no access to the day-to-day information, especially regarding local events, that the rest of us all take for granted. The visually handicapped have come to count on Radio Vision as a reliable source for information about their communities.

For the past 15 years, Daniel Hulse has done superlative work as program director. In addition, Carol Cleveland and many others have done a tremendous job, working tirelessly to coordinate the volunteers who find time to aid disadvantaged members of their community. All of these volunteers deserve our recognition and appreciation.

We are all indebted to these selfless volunteers whose hard work has enriched the lives of so many of my constituents, and I am proud to honor them today by calling to the attention of my colleagues their outstanding services.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE RAYMOND T. CHMELA, HAWTHORNE PARK DISTRICT BOARD PRESIDENT

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 23, 1996

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of an outstanding public servant in my community, Mr. Raymond Chmela, president of the Hawthorne Park District Board, who passed away March 31, 1996.

Mr. Chmela also served as a building inspector for the town of Cicero and coordinated the town's July 4 festival. A Korean war Army veteran, Mr. Chmela was active in many youth organizations in Cicero, including serving as past president of the South Cicero Baseball Association. He served on the Park District Board for 9 years.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my condolences to the family of this fine public servant, including his wife Roberta.