

seems senseless to appropriate billions of dollars to upgrade a system to secondary treatment when our ocean waters are adequately protected at the primary levels.

The Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] has been trying to force San Diego to upgrade its wastewater treatment plant, at a cost of billions, to comply with the act. The Clean Water Act mandates that cities use secondary treatment of sewage which removes at least 85 percent of the solids from sewage. However, San Diego's Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant uses advanced primary treatment to remove approximately 82 percent of the solids before it is discharged 4.5 miles out into the ocean.

For years, San Diego has argued that because of its deep ocean outfall, secondary treatment of its sewage is unnecessary and costly. According to noted scientists from Scripps Institute of Oceanography, it may even be detrimental to the environment. That is why I am encouraged that H.R. 794 would allow the city of San Diego to be free of the requirements regarding biological oxygen demand and total suspended solids in the effluent discharged into marine waters. Such modifications will not alter the balance of our marine life and viability.

As a Representative of San Diego, a retired naval officer, and all around sea-lover, I have immense concerns for the proper treatment of our waters. San Diego is unique in its ability to discharge of its waste into deep waters. We are unlike so many cities that must discharge into lakes and rivers. I believe this issue should be treated as a matter of common sense. According to current law, San Diego would be required to waste money to alter a system that has proven successful. The intent of H.R. 794 is to allow San Diego to treat its sewage in a cost-effective, as well as environmentally safe, manner.

Finally, I would like to thank Representative BILBAY for his efforts in this regard. This legislation would help to right a major wrong for San Diego. I look forward to the consideration of H.R. 794 in the near future. Speaker GINGRICH has also stated his concern for this unique situation. Speaker GINGRICH has proposed that 1 day a month be set aside in the House for the consideration of bills, such as this, targeted to eliminate specific activities of Federal agencies that are deemed stupid. I believe this is a perfect example of an unfunded mandate at its worst. As witnessed by majority votes in the House and Senate, there is a need to prevent Congress from imposing mandates, often unnecessary, on States without providing the proper funding for them.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TOXIC POLLUTION RESPONSIBILITY ACT AND THE MUNICIPAL LIABILITY CAP ACT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 1995

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today, I reintroduced legislation addressing one of the central problems in the Superfund Program—municipal liability. I have introduced this legislation in the past two sessions and was pleased that it was included in principle in

the comprehensive Superfund reform which was supported by a wide coalition and nearly gained congressional approval last year.

The Toxic Pollution Responsibility Act and the Municipal Liability Cap Act would free local governments from the costly entanglements of third party lawsuits generated by parties eager to share the costs of Superfund cleanup. Far too often, potentially responsible parties [PRP's] with obligations to contribute to clean-up costs initiate third party lawsuits against communities which had disposed simple municipal solid waste as sties which later found their way onto the National Priorities List [NPL]. Sometimes, these legal actions are predicated on serious, but erroneous, intentions of shifting cleanup costs to municipalities and taxpayers. Sometimes, however, they are just dilatory tactics meant to postpone final payments and cleanup.

The success of these tactics is obvious. In the 15 years of the program, only 5 percent of the 1,245 sites on the NPL have been completely cleaned up. And for that small accomplishment, an estimated \$20 billion in combined Federal, State, and private funds has been spent. The National Association of Manufacturers estimates that the average site clean up takes 11 years and between \$25 and \$40 million. This is a far cry from the original EPA estimates of 5 to 8 years and \$7 million.

To linger in negotiations and courts for years on end is very costly. A November 1993 Rand Corp. study of Superfund-related expenditures for 108 companies indicates that 32 percent of these combined expenses went to legal fees. There are few municipalities—particularly small communities—which can afford such exorbitant prices. To meet these costs, implicated towns would have little recourse other than tax hikes and/or reduced local services.

And beyond this, these lawsuits have averted the main principle of the Superfund law—to make the polluter pay.

Municipalities are not the hazardous waste polluters. They disposed simple everyday waste at these sites—coffee beans, toilet paper tubes, and banana peels—and not the industrial hazardous waste which transformed simple landfills into Superfund sites. There is no equating one with the other. And the law must reflect this distinction.

Furthermore, communities performed this duty not only to fulfill their traditional local responsibilities, but at the behest of the U.S. Congress and the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA]. In passing the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 [RCRA], Congress specifically noted that "the collection and disposal of solid wastes should continue to be primarily the function of State, regional, and local agencies." Congress was clear in RCRA that local governments should hold the primary responsibilities in solid waste management within their jurisdiction. Are we to punish them now for complying so efficiently?

The two bills which I have introduced today recognize the innocence of these actions. The provisions of the bills apply to transporters and generators of municipal solid waste which have not been named by the EPA as PRP's. The first of my bills—the Toxic Pollution Responsibility Act—would entirely exempt these parties from the threat of third party suits. The second of my bills—the Municipal Liability Cap Act—would cap the total municipal liability obligation at 4 percent for each site. This cap

was first advocated in 1992 by an internal EPA review board. This principle was also incorporated into last year's comprehensive Superfund reform proposal as a 10-percent cap on municipal liability.

The overwhelmingly decisive passage of unfunded mandates legislation by the House demonstrates our commitment to providing overburdened local governments with long overdue relief. These are our partners in governance and serve the same citizens we serve. We owe them this much. I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor one or both of these initiatives and I encourage the House Committee on Commerce to consider this important proposal for inclusion once again in a comprehensive Superfund reform package.

A DECENT MINIMUM WAGE

HON. MIKE WARD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 1995

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues an article by Robert Kuttner which appeared in the January 29, 1995 issue of the Washington Post. I feel that this article vividly illustrates the need for an increase in the minimum wage and I hereby submit the following text of this article for the RECORD.

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 29, 1995]

A DECENT MINIMUM WAGE

(By Robert Kuttner)

President Clinton wants to raise the minimum wage. The Republicans object. Indeed, House Majority Leader Richard Arney wants to repeal existing minimum wage laws.

Politically, this was a difficult call for Clinton. On the one hand, raising the minimum wage seems to contradict Clinton's well-advertised return to his "New Democrat" roots. The federal minimum wage evokes FDR, factory workers and the Great Depression, a set of images that Clinton hopes to transcend. The middle class, object of Clinton's courtship, earns a lot more than the minimum wage—or it isn't middle class.

At the same time, a higher minimum wage clearly resonates with the Clinton theme of honoring work. In his State of the Union speech, the president once again saluted Americans working longer hours for less pay, and suggested they deserve more reward. These are precisely the people who've stopped voting, but who tend to vote Democratic when they vote at all.

Contrary to mythology, most of the 4 million minimum wage workers are not teenagers flipping burgers after school. They are breadwinners, mostly female, contributing to an increasingly inadequate household income.

Moreover, the value of the minimum wage has deteriorated markedly. Throughout the late 1950s, under President Eisenhower, it had a real (inflation adjusted) value of over \$5 an hour in today's dollars. In the mid-'60s, before eroded by inflation again, it peaked at \$6.38—50 percent higher than today's value. As recently as 1978, it was worth over \$6, enough for two breadwinners to earn a barely middle-class living. Today it is just \$4.25.

In that sense, the Republican views on the minimum wage are also contradictory. Republicans, even more fiercely than President Clinton, want to replace welfare with work. But if work doesn't pay a living wage, then