

listening might catch the bug and get involved also. It is the testimony of a volunteer's experience that is usually the best way to recruit others. Thus, it is the act of sharing and telling that becomes the greatest service.

Mr. Speaker, the sacrifices Mr. Philips has made, along with his continuing involvement to ensure the safety and well being of the citizens of Eastern Long Island, make him worthy of the honor Volunteer of the Year.

EARTH DAY

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 7, 1995

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, with a new Republican majority, Americans hoped for the best—now we know after 3 months, to expect the worst: Republican partisanship serving special interests, not the American people and their families.

As citizens all across America prepare to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, I am deeply troubled that in our Nation's Capital, the 104th Congress is working furiously to destroy almost all that has been accomplished in the last three to four decades. This "contract" on America—on America's landscapes, on America's air, on America's water, on America's parks and wilderness, will take a terrible toll. This environmental assault is an insult to the American people.

That first Earth Day, in 1970, was based upon an enthusiastic grassroots movement that fueled a conservation ethic and commitment to the environment for future generations. In the 1970's Americans were rightly concerned about clean air and clean water and even the threatened extinction of our national symbol—the bald eagle. In response Congress enacted landmark conservation legislation, which today are household words—the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

Our Nation was energized about the progress in addressing these concerns and extended this American conservation ethic and vision to challenge global problems of rainforest destruction, Antarctica's preservation, biodiversity, ozone depletion, and global warming. In response the United States has been an architect in the development of international conferences and numerous treaties to save the spaceship Earth.

But on this silver anniversary of Earth Day, we face a new challenge—a corrosive and embarrassing tarnish to America's Earth Day 1995. In Washington we have a new congressional majority with "an attitude": pay back the Democrats, antiregulation, anti-environment and anti-Federal Government. A Congress set to set back the environment to the thrilling days of yesterday. A new majority inexperienced and arrogant and legislating by anecdote based upon misinformation, misperceptions and fraud, but hell bent on destroying our Nation's public commitment to preservation, conservation, and restoration of future generations' natural legacy.

The intense assault on our national environmental policy and laws isn't stated clearly in the "contract," but between the lines and veiled from public scrutiny under the guise of "regulatory reform," property rights, unfunded mandates—the examples and justification for

such action is the mosaic of environmental law. This new Congress seems intent on walking away from science and decades of environmental policy and serving as the complaint tool to special interests whose only interest is the bottom line.

Today, everything is at stake: clean air, safe drinking water, park and wilderness protection, forest conservation preservation and protection of our endangered species. The pace of the assault is purposeful and relentless—a "hundred days" of force fed legislation without deliberation or accountability.

Last month the House passed appropriations legislation that savages our national forests by mandating sales which would double the timber harvest nationwide in just 2 years—without regard to any current environmental law and shut off from public comment as required by law. Last week, by a single vote, the Senate refused to moderate this policy. The same House appropriations bill slashed funding needed to implement the Clean Air Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

This month a House committee is considering legislation to rewrite the Clean Water Act. It was reported that this new proposal was actually written with the help of lobbyists in closed-door sessions without input from the Environmental Protection Agency or other Members with environmental concerns. This is not good clean water policy—the measure has been aptly dubbed "the polluters' bill of rights."

All this follows House-passed legislation now making its way through the Senate, that puts a freeze on all regulations with a special 2-year hold on the Endangered Species Act, forces the Federal Government to pay regulatory compensation to property owners impacted by environmental laws and requires agencies that promulgate rules to do elaborate analysis before issuance subjecting all to court challenge—simply a formula to paralyze the Federal Government.

Laws like the Endangered Species Act serve as the "canary in the coal mine." Rather than denying the problem or blaming the messenger, Congress should be solving the problem—stop rationalizing excuses and promoting paid critics who justify renegeing on the laws. We should become engaged in the tough job of problem solving and changing our Nation's behavior, to live in balance with the limitations of the natural environment.

Regulations are the wheels which carry the laws into effect. They are based upon the perception, knowledge, and views of the people we represent. Frustration in America has grown. In the easy politics that bemoans government and redtape and seeks instant gratification, the environmental laws have become the stumbling block, the symbol that complicates life and limits behavior. The Federal Government leads such policy because the problems don't know political lines. But it is a collaborative role—environmental policy cannot be taken for granted, cannot be permitted to be politically expedient. Rather, environmental policy is a special trust. Its application should work with States—but especially and most importantly, with citizens.

The American citizen during the next 3 weeks, while Members are in their Districts, can help stop this assault. Challenge your policymaker to see the light—or feel the heat. They need to be forcefully reminded that environmental policies and laws now brutally at-

tacked were not forged through partisan warfare. They are not the work of Democrats or Republicans alone—rather they are uniquely derived from years of deliberation, of listening and responding to the core conservation values and ethics of the American people.

These policies are based on the wisdom of Americans who by experience, education, and ethics understood that there are some areas of this vast Nation that shouldn't be despoiled. They are based on the right of all Americans to breathe clean air and drink clean water. They are based on a commitment to the future that we all share—to hand down to the next generation a healthy planet. These views are basic to the definition of us as a people and culture.

Americans will not turn over our natural legacy to those who would destroy it. We must educate those in office with on-the-job training or by removal from office if they are incorrigible.

This vast and beautiful planet is like the design of a rare and complex tapestry. The weaving is made valuable not by any one thread but by the way that hundreds of strands are arranged. Each section is connected to the next in innumerable ways, as each thread in our eyes is connected to the next in innumerable ways to make an impression—a mosaic.

Understandably, difficult environmental policy questions follow from this example. As policymakers our task is to use this ecologically sensitive and irreplaceable resource, without arbitrarily cutting it to pieces and destroying this biosphere forever.

This involves understanding the impact of activities, measuring of the biodiversity, and the relationship of the physical and natural environment, which are all part of a larger cycle. A thread that is pulled one place changes the rest of the picture. Every action has a consequence. For these reasons and many more, the Federal Government enacted environmental laws and policies to help us be reasonable stewards of our land and resources. The intent was to guide us and limit our individual actions—a policy path that would optimize our utilization today while maintaining and enhancing the prospects for tomorrow's generations.

Citizens after all are a significant and much-needed force in these policy debates. Recruit more people, continue to make yourselves heard. Have faith. Americans haven't stopped caring, they have assumed that these issues were once achieved and are cemented in place. Americans—make yourselves heard—if the people lead, the Members of Congress will follow.

THE INTRODUCTION OF FAIR PAY ACT OF 1995

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 7, 1995

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, in enacting the Equal Pay Act [EPA] in 1963, Congress hoped to close the wage gap between men and women by prohibiting wage discrimination based on the gender of the employees performing the work. Some progress has been