

LAND DISPOSAL PROGRAM
FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 1996

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, during the 104th Congress, the Commerce Committee has been highlighting the problem of inflexible or inappropriate statutory requirements. These requirements can prevent EPA from issuing regulations or facility cleanups that address realistic and significant risks in a cost-effective and cost-reasonable manner.

H.R. 2036 embodies the position of the EPA in final rules that were later struck down by the courts. In each case, EPA did a regulatory impact analysis which found that the costs of a given option were exceedingly high and the benefits very low. In each case, EPA sought a more flexible and balanced approach but was ultimately directed by the Courts to the most counterproductive result.

In their March 2, 1995, summary of the Proposed Rule EPA wrote, "the Agency is required to set treatment standards for these relatively low-risk waste and disposal practices, although there are other actions and projects with which the Agency could provide greater protection of human health and the environment."

In this particular case, EPA estimates suggest over half a billion dollars will be spent with little if any improvement to human health. Indeed, the Agency states that less safe alternatives may be chosen over more safe alternatives. That is unacceptable. In their letter endorsing H.R. 2036 the administration wrote, "the bill would eliminate a mandate that the EPA promulgate stringent and costly treatment requirements for certain low-risk wastes that already are regulated in Clean Water Act or Safe Drinking Water Act units."

H.R. 2036 is also endorsed by organizations representing State environmental programs such as the Groundwater Protection Council, and the Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials as well as the National Association of Counties.

I appreciate the bipartisan efforts of Ms. Lincoln and the administration, including the chair of the Council on Environmental Quality Kathleen McGinty, and her staff, in support of H.R. 2036. It is important to move forward with legislation that injects common sense into current statutory law and H.R. 2036 is just such an inflection.

This is time-critical legislation and I hope that it can proceed swiftly through the process. I should note, however, that these issues—while important for many—are the tip of the iceberg. We must make fundamental reform to ensure that our regulatory programs address realistic and significant risks through cost-effective and cost-reasonable means. There is much work to be done.

I urge all the Members to vote for swift passage of H.R. 2036 to prevent EPA from being forced to use unnecessary and costly regulations.

CONGRESSIONAL BOYCOTT

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 1, 1996

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I wish to voice my strong disapproval with the French Government's nuclear testing program. I join with many of my colleagues—and most of the world community—in protesting the detonation of six French nuclear weapons in the South Pacific. That is why I am joining the congressional boycott of the French President's visit to Congress.

French President Jacques Chirac will appear today before a joint session of Congress. I can not of good conscience attend. France and the United States have a proud relationship of cooperation extending back to the beginning of our Nation. However, France's conduct in the South Pacific can not be justified. Exploding nuclear weapons in pursuit of further weapons development contradicts the view of 175 nations—including France and the United States—who signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It also needlessly endangers the environment and people of the region.

Just last week, France acknowledged the presence of radioactive iodine in the lagoon near the Mururoa test site. Despite their declaration that the tests blast are perfectly safe, we have no way to know if this is true. Since the French Government refuses to allow independent assessment of the environment impact of these nuclear explosions, I must remain suspicious. Are the people who live in the South Pacific threatened by nuclear poison in their region of the world? What will the ecological and human health threats 10, 20, or 100 years from now?

Although the Clinton administration has officially denounced the French nuclear testing program, its actions hardly match its rhetoric. I urge the White House to put real pressure on the Chirac government. Let us not forget our responsibility in the matter: The United States has long supported the French nuclear weapons program.

I must take special exception to the United States decision to allow French military aircraft to fly to the South Pacific test site via the use of United States airspace. How can the world take seriously a United States criticism of the French nuclear weapons testing program when the United States refuses to take even the most basic action to resist the French action. The only assurance Congress can get from the U.S. State Department is that no nuclear materials are being transported "according to the best of our knowledge." This hardly represents strong scrutiny by our Government.

Now that the French Government has ended its series of nuclear detonations, I call on President Chirac to firmly commit his nation to end all future tests. At the very least, France should declare the permanent closing of the South Pacific test site. France should also clean up the nuclear mess it left behind and allow independent monitoring of the area. It is the least they can do for the South Pacific peoples who will have to live with the legacy of decades of nuclear weapons testing.

The rationale for nuclear testing ran out years ago. If the world governments won't stop this cold war relic now, then when? I look

forward to the recognition by France that their ongoing nuclear weapons testing program was simply wrong. Perhaps we can now move toward an international ban on all future such explosive tests. The United States must continue to press for a comprehensive ban on all such future nuclear test explosions. And France must become an active player in these negotiations.

It is my hope that a change in the behavior of France's Government will allow me to participate in Mr. Chirac's next visit to Congress. I also look forward to a successful conclusion to the ongoing comprehensive nuclear talks so the world can take an important step toward nuclear disarmament.

A CLEAN DEBT CEILING
EXTENSION BILL

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 1, 1996

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, the time has come for this Congress to face up to its responsibilities by passing a clean debt ceiling extension bill and not allow this great Nation for the first time in 220 years to default.

Just last week Moody's Investors Service announced that it might lower the credit rating for U.S. Treasury bonds—the first time in our Nation's history. This should not be a source of pride to any Member of Congress.

America cannot afford to have its full faith, its good word and its credit sacrificed on the altar of partisan posturing. Imagine Social Security checks and veterans' checks not being sent to recipients or honored when deposited by individuals who earned these benefits and rely on them. The American people cannot afford the higher interest rates that would result from default. We rail against "dead beat" dads * * * no one should be part of a "dead beat" Government.

Mr. Speaker, only you and your colleagues have the power to keep America from the disgrace and disaster of default. Let us together pass a bill now to avoid default and international discredit.

TRIBUTE TO ELIZABETH
DOUGNER

HON. ANTHONY C. BEILENSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 1, 1996

Mr. BEILENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of Topanga, CA's most dedicated and admired citizens, Elizabeth Doughner, who passed away recently.

Betty Doughner served as executive officer/clerk of the Board of Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains—formerly the Topanga-Las Virgenes Resource Conservation District—which carries out environmental education and restoration projects. During the 34 years Betty was employed by the District, she watched it grow from an operation with one employee—herself—to the 50-employee agency it is today.

In her position with the district, Betty worked tirelessly for our community. She helped secure conservation services for landowners in