

HONORING THE CONNECTICUT  
OLYMPIC ATHLETES

**HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my congratulations for the achievements of five world-class athletes from Connecticut. I am impressed with the remarkable showing of Connecticut's athletes in the 1998 Olympic Games. It is an accomplishment for such a small state to be home to five such gifted competitors. These young people embody not only incredible talent, but also a strong sense of sportsmanship. Connecticut is home to Sue Merz and Gretchen Ulion of the Women's Hockey Team, Beth Calcaterra-McMahon of the Luge Team, Chip Knight, an Alpine Skier, and Stacy Blumer, a Freestyle Skier. All five of these athletes are incredibly gifted and should be recognized and applauded.

The efforts of Olympic and Paralympic teams is awe-inspiring. The athletes symbolize the motto of the Olympic games: "swifter, higher, stronger." They are the strongest and the fastest. They are the best in the world. Olympians are leaders and role-models who play for the love of their sport. All athletes who have the opportunity to participate in the Olympics has proved themselves both dedicated and successful. These athletes should be commended for their commitment to enhance and develop their abilities. Their training is rigorous and the choice to pursue an Olympic medal is praiseworthy.

I would like to thank these athletes for proving themselves such honorable ambassadors of the United States. Their sportsmanship and dedication is unyielding. I am proud to stand and congratulate not only the five athletes from Connecticut but every member of both the 1998 USA Olympic and Paralympic teams.

23D ANNUAL CAPITAL PRIDE  
FESTIVAL MAY 30-JUNE 7, 1998

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to 23d Annual Capital Pride Festival, a celebration of and for the National Capital Area's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual communities and their friends.

Since its 1975 inception, the Capital Pride Festival has grown from a small block party into a nine-day series of events which culminate in a parade and a Pennsylvania Avenue street fair on June 7th. Last year, nearly 200 contingents marched in the parade. Hundreds of exhibitors participated in the street fair. More than 120,000 people attended this celebration.

This year its organizers and sponsors, the Whitman-Walker Clinic and One-In-Ten have selected "Diversity+Unity=Strength" for the Festival's theme.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in saluting the 23d Annual Capital Pride Festival, its organizers, and the volunteers who make it possible.

EARTH DAY

**HON. LEE H. HAMILTON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, April 29, 1998 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

EARTH DAY 1998: THE STATE OF OUR  
ENVIRONMENT

Twenty eight years ago, on the very first Earth Day, I stood on the lawn of the Indiana University commons and talked with students about a wide variety of environmental issues, from pulling tires out of rivers to marching in Washington for a better environment. Those of us who celebrated the first Earth Day were convinced of two things: the environment was a mess, and a lot of work was needed to do something about it.

What began as a teach-in in Bloomington and other communities has grown into a national event involving tens of millions of people across the country. The environmental movement has transformed our environment and our national politics. Environmental issues come up all the time in my work with constituents—from students talking about global warming and the future of the planet to public officials talking about upgrading water and sewer facilities in their communities. Environmentalism has firmly taken root in our political system.

On this, the 28th anniversary of Earth Day, we can take great pride in the advances that have been made in environmental protection. We have succeeded in reducing the levels of lead and other dangerous pollutants from the air. Lakes and rivers, once so contaminated they could catch on fire, now support large fish populations. Forests are rebounding. Endangered species, like the eagle and the buffalo, have been saved from extinction and are now thriving.

Hoosiers strongly support cleaning up our air, water, and land, and they want to leave the environment safe and clean for the next generation. They do not want to cut back on our environmental investment. Hoosiers do not say to me that we have too many parks, or that the air and water are too clean. They recognize, however, that we face new environmental challenges as we head into the 21st Century and need to adopt new strategies to build on our successes.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD

This country has achieved substantial gains in environmental protection over the last three decades. The Clean Air Act, passed in 1970, has dramatically reduced air pollution levels even though we drive twice as many cars twice as many miles. In the last decade, emissions of lead declined by 89%, particulates by 20%, sulfur dioxides by 26%, and carbon monoxide by 37%. Congress revised this law in 1990 to strengthen the ability of the Environmental Protection Agency, states and the private sector to work cooperatively to improve air quality, particularly in cities with significant pollution problems. The new law also aims to reduce pollutants which cause acid rain and contribute to global environmental problems, including ozone depletion and global warming.

We have also made gains in water quality. The Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts have succeeded in sharply reducing pollution in our rivers, lakes and streams while improving the quality of drinking water. Since 1972 the number of people served by modern sewage treatment facilities has al-

most doubled and the level of pollution discharged by municipal treatment plants has declined by 36%.

Our record on conserving critical lands and wildlife habitat is noteworthy. Many of our forested areas have been expanding, not contracting. The national forest system encompasses about 192 million acres, including the Hoosier National Forest in southern Indiana. We have also protected endangered species from extinction, and have largely curbed the dumping of hazardous materials.

CHALLENGES

Despite our achievements, we face daunting environmental challenges. First, a growing population and expanding economy continue to put stresses on our environment. Species continue to disappear; the tall-growth forests in the Northwest continue to decline; fishery stocks in our rivers and coastal areas are shrinking; and the list goes on. The challenge will be to continue our economic gains without jeopardizing the environment and public health.

Second, the environmental challenges are more complicated. For example, controlling the run-off of chemicals from thousands of farms and city streets, which is necessary to improve water quality, is difficult. Furthermore, many environmental problems, like global warming, ozone depletion, and threats to our fisheries, are global in nature, but achieving global consensus on any issue is not easy.

Third, our environmental laws need updating. Most environmental programs are of a "command and control" variety. The federal government sets regulations which the public and private sectors must follow. This approach made sense when we needed to make substantial gains in environmental quality. Now that we have achieved those improvements, the question is whether we should stay with the current system, which can be costly and cumbersome, or take a more flexible approach.

NEW APPROACH

I believe we need to rethink how we regulate the environment. This does not mean repealing current standards. The American public firmly rejected efforts in Congress a few years ago to weaken key environmental laws. Rather, they want a sensible role for government, one which includes less regulation while improving environmental protection.

I believe the following principles should, where appropriate, guide future policy on environmental regulation with the objective of making such regulation more flexible, less costly and less complex:

First, we should find market-based solutions to environmental problems. Such an approach might entail providing incentives to private business or local governments to meet or exceed environmental standards; or it might involve creating a system of marketable pollution permits. Second, we should encourage cooperation between the federal government and the regulated community. Environmental regulation will always involve some tension between the two, but the federal government can take steps to minimize such conflict by working cooperatively with businesses, land-owners and other private interests to find solutions.

Third, we should give more discretion to state and local governments in managing environmental problems because they are often closer to the problems, and may have better ideas about solving them in innovative, cost-effective ways. Fourth, we should allocate federal resources to the most pressing environmental problems, particularly in an era of tight federal budgets. Too many federal dollars are wasted on programs of marginal social or economic benefit. Federal agencies