projects in the Upper Colorado Region. From developing programs to save water for irrigators, to developing trust between competing interests, John has always had a positive outlook and a willingness to discuss the issues, no matter how difficult.

John Porter has devoted his life to water interests, first as a farmer, and for the last eighteen years as Manager of the Dolores Water Conservancy District. John's commitment to the beneficial use and conservation of Colorado's water resources has garnered him a well deserved reputation as a ''water leader'' in the State of Colorado.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to offer this tribute in honor of Mr. John Porter. He is most deserving of the honor of the Wayne N. Aspinall Water Leader of the Year.

TRIBUTE TO CARETAKERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT INTERNATIONAL

HON. JOHN EDWARD PORTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 14, 2000

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I can think of no better way to safeguard the world's natural resources than to arm today's youth with the tools necessary to preserve our precious environment.

That's exactly the mission of Caretakers of the Environment International, a Pied Piper of sorts that leads youth along with a path of environmental awareness and activism. Young people from around the world answer the call of this nonprofit organization. They are taught the scientific lessons and practical skills to become environmental leaders.

A hallmark of the organization's activities each year is its annual conference where the host country becomes a laboratory to explore the conference theme. Past conferences have probed such environmental themes as the ''Arctic and the Environment,'' ''Development and Research in Environmental Education,'' and ''Tourism and the Environment.'' Costa Rica's tropical ecosystems were the backdrop last year for the 13th annual conference where 122 highly motivated students and teachers learned through workshops, field trips and social activities. Delegates visited rainforests, volcanoes and Pacific Ocean beaches to learn about biodiversity from expert guides.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Caretakers of the Environment-USA, an American affiliate of the international group. Caretakers/USA reaches out to high school students and teachers—with diverse interests and abilities—and involves them in community action that develops a spirit of national and international cooperation for environmental problem solving.

Undoubtedly, Caretakers' efforts to improve science education encourage young people to pursue environmental careers that will help protect the world's environment. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the activities of Caretakers of the Environment and hope that my colleagues will join me in supporting its efforts.

THE MUD DUMP PERMANENT CLOSURE AND REMEDIATION ACT OF 2000

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 14, 2000

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to protect New Jersey's oceans and beaches from continued ocean dumping of harmful substances.

Just a few miles off the coast of Sandy Hook lies an area that—after years of protracted debate and political maneuvering—was appropriately designated as the Historic Area Remediation Site (HARS). The designation was made to protect the site from the future dumping of toxic dredged mud. It was July, 1996 when vice President Gore Triumphantly announced that the dumping would stop and the site—affectionately called the old Mud Dump—would be cleaned up with clean dredge material.

Unfortunately, we now know that the 1996 announcement was not an iron clad commitment to end ocean dumping of toxic sludge. In a betrayal of our trust, the Clinton Administration's Army Corps of engineers has approved permits allowing Castle Astoria Terminals, Inc., and Brooklyn Marine Terminals, to dump dredge materials that actually contain higher levels of contamination (including toxic PAHs and PCBs) than the stuff already in the Mud Dump.

Mr. Speaker, common sense dictates that you cannot clean up something by capping it with a substance dirtier than the original mess. Unfortunately, the ''category 1'' standards in use by the Army Corps and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are so insufficient that using the dredged mud from the Castle Astoria and Brooklyn Marine Terminals to remediate the HRS is like trying to clean an oil spill by pouring nuclear waste on top of it. It will only make a bad situation even worse.

Fortunately, the interests of keeping New Jersey's and New York's ports open, and protecting the environment and New Jersey's multi-billion dollar tourist industry, are not mutually exclusive. The people of New Jersey and New York need both the shipping and tourist industries to be healthy if our high standard of living is to be preserved. There are new ways to treat and decontaminate dredged materials so they are truly clean and pose no threat to the environment. New Jersey has been very proactive in trying to find creative ways of disposing of dredged materials so we can avoid the need to dump at sea. For example, dredged materials have been used in Elizabeth to cap a brownfields site and turn a deserted eyesore into a productive, job creating waterfront mall.

The problem, however, is that the State of New York has done virtually nothing to look beyond ocean dumping for its dredging needs. Every objective, outside observer of the ocean dumping fight admits that New York is not pulling its own weight. And the bottom line is that as long as New York can easily and cheaply use the Jersey Shore as a dumping ground for its dredged soil, New York will never have any incentive to look for real alternatives.

I mean to change that. Under the legislation I am introducing today, an immediate ban will be placed on any existing ocean dumping permits at the Mud Dump to be issued by the Army Corps until new remediation standards are in place.

The bill also requires the EPA, within 90 days of enactment, to formulate a new set of remediation standards. These remediation standards were promised to New Jerseyans in 1996, but four years later, they have still to be issued. We have waited long enough for these standards to be promulgated. It is time for the EPA to act to protect the health of our oceans and beaches.

In addition, my legislation sets forth basic principles that the EPA must follow when developing and proposing new remediation material standards.

First, the actual level of contaminants (including PAHs and PCBs) in the remediation material must be significantly lower than the Mud Dump pollutants it is to be used to cover. Sadly, under the current and deeply flawed EPA ''Category 1 standards,'' pollutant levels in proposed dredge spoils can actually exceed by many orders of magnitude the levels found in the material at the Mud Dump.

Second, the remediation material used at the Mud Dump must actually reduce pollution levels there.

Third, the remediation material must be shown to reduce the harmful impacts on the environment and marine life caused by the toxins found in the Mud Dump. It bears noting that the reason the HARS was created was not to provide the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey with an unlimited dumping ground. The HARS was created to remediate and clean up the toxins on the ocean floor and prevent harmful bioaccumulation of toxins in the seafood we eat.

Fourth, the new remediation standards must meet 'sunshine laws' that provide opportunities for a public notice and a public comment period. This provision is needed because the Army Corps issued the Brooklyn Marine Terminals permit without providing adequate public notice for comment. On January 24th, 2000, the Army Corps recognized its failure to provide adequate public comment and held a public meeting in New Jersey.

Fifth, the goal of the new remediation standards is to eventually clean up the Mud Dump to reflect a contamination level that is substantially equivalent to the level found naturally in the ocean. Given the amount of debate over what the EPA defines as ''clean,'' it is important to set clear and common sense goals of what the word ''clean'' really means—restoring the oceans to their natural state. Only when consumers of seafood are reassured that the fish they eat are free from pollutants will the damage from ocean dumping be fully remediated.

Lastly, the bill would permanently close the Mud Dump as soon as it is fully remediated and capped with a clean layer of sand and silt that prevents existing pollution at the bottom of the ocean from finding its way into our food chain. If the economy of New York and New Jersey are to remain vibrant and healthy, we need to continue exploring alternative dredge disposal methods now. The costs of inaction greatly outweigh the additional costs of alternative disposal methods when one factors in the $14.8 billion tourist and commercial fishing industry in New Jersey that will be seriously harmed if ocean dumping continues unabated.