

morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

#### LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, my goal in Congress has been the promotion of livable communities, the Federal Government being a better partner with State and local governments than the private sector. In order to make our families safe, healthy, and economically secure transportation is clearly a central element of those deliberations and the bicycle is getting increasing attention as an indicator of livable communities.

At the turn of the century, bicycling was a critical mode of transportation. It was cheaper than a horse. It was faster than walking, and it was more convenient for most than street cars. The demand for new and safe bicycle routes led to a national "good roads" movement; a successful cyclist who led lobbying of Congress won a \$10,000 grant to study the possibility of a paved highway system.

It is with some irony that this quest for quality biking led us down the path that ultimately led to the interstate freeway system; and now 100 years, we have come full circle, because the quest for relief from traffic congestion of automobiles is now having people look more attentively at the possibilities of cycling.

Americans still view biking as a very favorable mode of transportation. A study by the New York Department of Transportation showed that in communities with bike lanes and bike parking over 50 percent of the people living within 5 to 10 miles from work would, in fact, commute by bicycle.

Yet Americans are driving nearly 2½ trillion miles a year; they are spending the equivalent of over 50 workdays per year trapped behind the wheel of their car just going to and from work. Every day the average American adult drives close to 40 miles and spends over an hour in their car.

When considering traffic and parking, 40 percent of our trips would be faster on a bike. I certainly found that to be the case, since in the 4 years that I have been on Capitol Hill being able to routinely beat my colleagues in trips to the White House and back on a bike rather than a car.

Increasingly, communities are working to reintegrate cycling back into their transportation systems. Chicago; Philadelphia; Eugene, Oregon; Davis, California; Rockville, Maryland; Washington, D.C. are all actively promoting a more bicycle-friendly transportation system. My own hometown of Portland, Oregon, has been declared twice

in the last 5 years as America's most bike-friendly community.

These pro-bike efforts in cities around the country, this progress is due, in no small part, to the national leadership provided by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR).

He was the champion of funding for bike paths in the 1991 ISTEA legislation and the T21 legislation last year for the surface transportation reauthorization. He continues to promote bike-friendly legislation as a ranking member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Madam Speaker, I am especially proud of his membership in our bipartisan Bike Caucus, perhaps the most avid cyclist in American public office. These pro-bike efforts across the country are not asking everyone to trade in their car for a bicycle, but instead to encourage small but meaningful changes in our everyday transportation decisions and to expand the choices available to Americans.

Biking, walking, or taking transit just a few short trips a week to school, to work, to the grocery store, other nearby errands can have a profound effect on the quality of life.

It is estimated that a 4-mile round trip that we do not take by car prevents nearly 15 pounds of air pollutant from contaminating the air; and in a time of skyrocketing gasoline prices and questions about availability of oil, it is important to note that biking to work just 2 days a week or telecommuting or transit by American workers just 2 days a week would completely eliminate our dependence on oil imports.

May is National Bike Safety Month, and in honor of this occasion and National Bike to Work Day, the Congressional Bicycle Caucus will be riding from Capitol Hill to Freedom Plaza this Friday, May 5. We are urging Members and staff to join us at 7:45 on the west side of Capitol Hill for this ride.

Madam Speaker, in addition, we urge people now to earn their pin and join the Bicycle Caucus.

#### CELEBRATING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL SUCCESSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, it is estimated that 500 million people around the world participated in Earth Day on April 22 this year. We should consider how the environment has changed since the first Earth Day was celebrated in 1970.

Although a celebration, Earth Day 1970 generated a large amount of dire predictions for the future. I think we should take a moment to look back at those. One Harvard biologist declared "we are in an environmental crisis which threatens the survival of this Nation and of the world as a suitable place for human habitation."

Another common premonition of devastation centered on population growth. Environmental doomsayers in 1970 estimated that the world population would exceed 7 billion people by the year 2000, prompting one Stanford biologist to state, "At least 100 to 200 million people per year will be starving to death during the next 10 years."

This picture of widespread starvation has not materialized, nor has the population projections. Instead of more than 7 billion people on the earth today, we have roughly just 6 billion.

Just as in 2000, environmentalists in 1970 saw a growing environmental catastrophe in the form of climate change. Unlike today, 30 years ago the alarm was sounded over global cooling. They talked about another ice age was in the works.

One ecologist, Kenneth Watt, proclaimed that, "The world will be about 4 degrees colder . . . in 1990, but 11 degrees colder in the year 2000. This is about twice what it would take to put us into an ice age."

Now, frankly, there are no ice sheets spreading across this continent; the threat of global cooling dissolved into the sea of misinformation. However, how can we rage against climatic change if the world is not getting colder? It, therefore, must be becoming warmer.

Evidence indicates that the world's average temperature has increased by 1 degree over the past 100 years. However, data from global satellites indicate that the earth actually has cooled by less than one-tenth of one degree Celsius over the past 18 years. The warnings of serious global warming today have as little basis in fact as those for global cooling 30 years ago.

Now, doomsayers in 1970 also warned of poisonous air ravaging the populations in our major cities. In that year, Life Magazine said, "In a decade, urban dwellers will have to wear gas masks to survive air pollution." The same scientist that predicted that starvation would kill "at least 100 to 200 million people per year" also opined 3 decades ago that air pollution would take "hundreds of thousands of lives in the next few years."

How is our air quality now? The Environmental Protection Agency reports that between 1970 and 1997, emission of every major pollutant except nitrogen dioxide has decreased. From 1988 to 1997, the number of unhealthy air quality days decreased by an average of two-thirds for every major city in the United States of America.

The first Earth Day in 1970 was observed against a backdrop of dire environmental predictions. Unfortunately, Earth Day 2000 was accompanied with similar predictions of environmental calamities. Instead of providing a platform for the harbingers of ecological destruction, we should use Earth Day, I think, to acknowledge the progress we have made.

The environment is better today than it was 10 years ago and better