

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

should conduct risk assessment, based on scientific evidence, and cost-benefit analysis before implementing new regulations.

TRIBUTE TO MING PAO DAILY NEWS

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ming Pao Daily News. Ming Pao Daily News celebrated their first anniversary on April 8, 1998.

Since Ming Pao Daily News' entry into the northeast market last year, it has quickly grown to become one of the most widely circulated daily publications within the tri-state area. Ming Pao Daily News' circulation in Hong Kong, Canada, and now the United States, has made it one of the most influential Chinese newspapers internationally.

For the past year, Ming Pao Daily News has reached out to New York's Asian community and forged a positive and hopefully long lasting relationship. Ming Pao Daily News has hosted various charity fundraisers, events, and activities that not only benefitted the Asian community, but all of New York City.

It is the media's responsibility to accurately, objectively, and timely report international, national, and/or local news to their audience and I encourage Ming Pao Daily News to continue with that role. It is that valuable service that their readers have come to rely upon.

It is my pleasure to recognize Ming Pao Daily News on the auspicious occasion of their first anniversary and their contributions this past year.

RECOGNIZING "HIRE A VETERAN WEEK" IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

**HON. GEORGE E. BROWN, JR.**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring the attention of the Nation to the cause of improving the employment opportunities of our military veterans and to the commendable efforts of the State of California during its upcoming "Hire A Veteran Week" of May 3-9.

One of the commitments we make to the men and women who serve our Nation in the military is to provide them assistance in finding employment when they re-enter the civilian economy. Most of our military service members develop skills and personal attributes that will serve them well in the civilian economy. But even in the best of economic conditions it can sometimes take a long time to find a job, and as a Nation we should help shorten that time for our military service members.

I have sponsored efforts in Congress to improve veterans' employment prospects, and I have admired the efforts made on behalf of veterans in these areas day-in and day-out by service organizations and by employment specialists with federal and state agencies. The State of California is continuing a strong tradi-

tion of assistance to veterans' employment prospects by sponsoring "Hire A Veteran Week" this first full week of May 1998.

I commend California for this effort, and I commend the men and women of California's public-and-private-sectors who will take part in promoting veterans' employment this coming week and year-round.

MINNESOTA AMERICA READS PROGRAM

**HON. BRUCE F. VENTO**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 1998*

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the work of Minnesota volunteers participating in the America Reads program. There is perhaps no issue more important to the future of this nation than education. The volunteers I speak of have shown a true dedication to the welfare of our youth by ensuring that children in Minnesota elementary schools get the attention and assistance they need to improve their reading skills.

Twenty-three Minnesota colleges and universities are currently involved in the America Reads program, which was started by President Clinton in 1996. The goal is to ensure that every child can read well and independently by the end of third grade. We all know of the links between literacy and future success. However, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 40 percent of America's fourth graders aren't reading at basic levels. The America reads program reaches out to children and gives them the individual attention necessary to make sure they don't fall through the cracks of the system.

If children lose interest in reading early, their chance of being successful later in life is difficult. Quoting an educator who recently visited with me, "In the first three grades, children learn to read. The rest of their lives, they read to learn". Volunteers help students realize that reading is not only fundamental, but fun. The time spent with tutors enables children to relax and enjoy books, which is something that can't always be done in the classroom.

I have attached an article from the Saint Paul Pioneer Press for my colleagues' review. It describes the America Reads program in Minnesota, and highlights just one of the many success stories this initiative has produced. I applaud the efforts of these volunteers, and wish to thank them for their dedication to the education of our youth.

I am especially pleased to note and thank some familiar names and friends who are highlighted in these reports—our former colleague Senator Harris Wofford, Saint Paul's former Mayor James Scheibel, and his spouse Mary Pat Lee. Their willingness to share their time, talent and energy is an extraordinary example of public service, and I wish them continued success in their endeavors; helping students learn to read so that they might read to learn!

[From the Pioneer Press/Pioneer Planet, April 20, 1998]

VOLUNTEERS REAP THE REWARDS OF TEACHING YOUNGSTERS TO READ

(By THOMAS J. COLLINS)

No tear-welling crescendo or awe-inspiring fireworks marked the encounter last week

between a middle-aged Minneapolis bar owner and a bubbly St. Paul first-grader.

Life-changing moments rarely are showy. If you see them at all, they are reflected briefly in a gleam of an eye or a confidently raised chin—unspoken signals between David Arone and Kiara Renfro as they read together in a Daytons Bluff Elementary School classroom.

Yet it is partly as a result of this encounter that the 44-year-old Arone, whose family has owned Arones Bar in Minneapolis since 1935, has decided to pursue a new career by becoming an elementary school teacher.

For Kiara, 7, the encounter also has been a transforming experience, giving her the help she needs to continue to teach her brothers to read.

Scratch the political pronouncements and doomsday warnings about the decline of America's public schools and you'll find enclaves, like this one created by Arone and Kiara, where just the reverse seems to be true.

He is a volunteer in Metropolitan State University's America Reads programs and spends 15 hours a week helping first- through third-grade students at Daytons Bluff improve their reading.

She is a first-grader on a mission to make something of herself despite challenges that define her inner-city elementary school—high poverty and student mobility as well as many students who do not speak English. And, of course, looming in her future is a deadline: National research shows that if she doesn't learn to read by the end of third grade, she'll be more prone to a lifetime of ignorance and poverty.

On this particular day, Arone is leaning over Kiara as they read a book about fishing bears. Together they sound out difficult words, "shh . . . shh . . . shake." She glides over words she recognizes. "Good job!" he says, as she masters each page.

Later, he bends close to Kiara and whispers in her ear: "Some day you will write a book."

MINNESOTANS HEED THE CALL

It is not only Kiara's life that has been changed, thanks to President Clinton's plan to mobilize 100,000 work-study students and other volunteers under the America Reads program. Arone's life has taken a new turn as well.

"From my experience here at Daytons Bluff, I've decided to change careers and go into teaching," he says, with a hint of shyness in his voice. "This is going to sound corny, but I knew this is where I needed to be. I love this atmosphere. I love kids, and I've loved being here."

Clinton's call to improve reading for young students seems to have been embraced with particular enthusiasm in Minnesota.

Metropolitan State in St. Paul was the first Minnesota college or university to join more than 70 colleges and universities nationwide that joined the reading program in 1996, its inaugural year. The school, long involved in community partnerships to help educate children and their parents, also developed a college course to better prepare its student tutors for their often challenging urban K-12 students.

Twenty-two other Minnesota colleges and universities now have developed programs of their own to buoy educational and community partnerships and training provided by the 45 members of the Minnesota Campus Compact. The wide-ranging programs include reading to at-risk children and a study of ways to strengthen the housing stock and economy of the Daytons Bluff neighborhood.

The campus compact takes seriously its goal of changing lives and communities, says Mark Langseth, executive director of the compact.