

CELEBRATING EARTH DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate our 46th Earth Day, it is critical that we recognize the opportunities that stem from addressing some of our most pressing environmental problems.

All too often we hear the argument that environmental policies are agents of economic destruction. From the Clean Power Plan to renewable energy development and energy-efficient technologies, every time a new environmental policy is proposed, we hear the same rhetoric: This will kill jobs, drive up costs, destroy trade, and stifle America's ability to succeed.

But the reality is those claims are simply not true. They have been debunked and proven wrong time and again, but the truth doesn't seem to matter when it comes to protecting our environment.

Without a doubt, one of America's greatest assets is the ingenuity of its people. Throughout our Nation's history, American innovation has triumphed in the face of great challenges. Unleashing that American innovation can bring big wins for both the environment and the economy.

There is no better example of this than when we look at our renewable energy sector. For decades, America has chased the promise of clean, domestic energy.

In recent years, costs for numerous critical clean energy technologies—wind power, solar panels, super-energy-efficient LED lights and electric vehicles—have fallen dramatically.

The accompanying surge in deployment has been impressive. While these technologies still represent a small percentage of their respective markets, that share is expanding at a rapid pace and influencing other markets.

Today the U.S. generates 3 times as much wind power and 20 times as much solar power as we did in 2008. This kind of thinking will help States meet the EPA's requirements laid out in the Clean Power Plan.

Compared with fossil fuel technologies, which are typically mechanized and capital-intensive, the renewable energy industry is more labor-intensive.

This means that, on the average, more jobs are created for each unit of electricity generated from renewable sources than from fossil fuels.

In addition to creating new jobs, increasing our use of renewable energy offers more important economic development benefits. Local governments collect property and income taxes and other payments from renewable energy project owners while owners of the land that wind projects are built on also receive lease payments ranging from \$3,000 to \$6,000 per megawatt of installed capacity.

A new study from the U.S. Energy Information Administration suggests

that, in the coming year, the booming solar sector will add more new electricity-generating capacity than any other energy sector, including natural gas and wind.

The more we support clean energy innovation and new technological ideas, the better positioned we are to reap the economic rewards.

Examples of those wins are all around, leading to States and communities investing in clean energy innovation and developing smart, low-cost technologies to help reduce energy costs.

On this front, my home State of Illinois is moving full steam ahead. The city of Chicago has partnered with utility companies and citizen groups to work on a new initiative to get 1 million smart thermostats into northern Illinois homes by 2020.

The innovative partnership offers rebates that will nearly halve the cost of thermostats that allow residents to control the temperatures of their homes via mobile devices. This helps us once again move the needle against climate change.

Of course, clean energy technology isn't our only energy innovation success story. Energy efficiency is truly our Nation's greatest energy achievement.

Without the gains in energy efficiency made since 1973, it is estimated that today's U.S. economy would require 60 percent more energy than we currently consume.

Energy efficiency improvements over the last 40 years have reduced our national energy bill by more than \$700 billion.

Instead of working from the assumption that tighter regulations will hurt our government's export share, we should focus on the edge that we gain from innovation.

This Earth Day, I challenge my colleagues to realize the opportunity that climate change provides us and support solutions that allow us to turn what used to be daunting challenges into profitable opportunities.

MINNESOTA'S SIXTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IS THE LAND OF HOCKEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate two young men from my district, Riley Tuft and Nick Althaus; Nick Althaus for his memorable performance at the Minnesota High School State Hockey Tournament last month, and Riley Tuft for his performance on the hockey rink all year.

Riley Tuft of Blaine has been named Mr. Hockey, an award given to the best high school senior hockey player in our great State of Minnesota. This season alone, Tuft scored an incredible 49 goals and had 36 assists for 85 points in only 31 games. That is an amazing 2.74 points per game.

Nick Althaus of St. Cloud won the Frank Brimsek Award, an annual award given to Minnesota's top senior goaltender.

In Minnesota, hockey is not just a sport, it is a way of life. Many young men and women work and train to win and participate in the best State hockey tournament in the country.

Congratulations to Nick and Riley for their hard work and incredible success this year, and best of luck in the future, both on and off the rink.

A STRONG WOMAN—INSIDE AND OUT

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the strength and endurance of St. Cloud native Laura Knoblach, who just, last month, became the youngest woman to finish a double triathlon.

Laura finished the Double ANVIL Ultra Triathlon, a rigorous event that consisted of swimming 4.8 miles, biking 224 miles, and running two consecutive marathons. She finished all of this in less than 36 hours.

Not only did Laura complete an arduous triathlon, but she did so for a good cause. She created a GoFundMe page titled "A Tri to End Trafficking," which raised money to help educate South African girls and prevent them from becoming victims of sex trafficking.

Laura Knoblach is currently a junior at the University of Boulder in Colorado, where she studies secondary education and majors in English and Spanish. She hopes to one day teach English as a second language.

I have no doubt that Laura will accomplish all of her goals and more, as she is the perfect example that anything is possible if you work hard enough.

A COACH REMEMBERED

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the astounding life and legacy of Coach Dean Taylor, who recently passed away.

Coach Taylor founded the football program at Sartell High School and built it into the powerhouse program it is today.

From Sartell, he went on to become an assistant coach at St. John's University for eight seasons and then became head coach at St. Cloud Cathedral from 2009 to 2012. Coach Taylor's impressive football resume ultimately led to his induction into the Minnesota State Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

However, it is not just the X's and O's of coaching that we will remember about Coach Taylor. Coach Taylor will also—and maybe even more importantly—be remembered for the incredible impact he made on the lives of all the student athletes he touched.

Condolences to his wife, Kathy; his children, Steve and Kristi; as well as his many friends and loved ones. I thank you for sharing your husband and father with our community.

RESTORING AMERICANS' TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the fact that