

April 21, 2006

SCHAKOWSKY CALLS FOR ACTION TO SLOW CLIMATE CHANGE, PROTECT GREAT LAKES ON EARTH DAY

CHICAGO, IL -- U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky today released the below statement calling for President Bush and Congress to take action to slow climate change and clean up the Great Lakes this Earth Day:

This Earth Day, dramatic environmental changes remind us of the immediate threat climate change is posing to our health and safety. The polar ice caps are melting at an unprecedented rate, threatening coastal communities that are home to billions. Violent storms off our shores are increasing in intensity and regularity. Whole ecosystems are migrating north, threatening regional economies and cultures.

President Bush has let industry dictate his environmental policy. This year, the President has proposed giving polluters more leeway by cutting funding for clean air and water programs and delaying controls on mercury emissions.

The President has failed to meet his commitment to restore our Great Lakes. President Bush has underfunded essential Great Lakes clean-up programs, failed to enforce the Clean Water Act, and left the door open to dangerous oil and gas drilling. As we know from the many beach closings we experience each summer, there is an urgent need for President Bush to protect the world's largest freshwater resources.

When it comes to climate change, this Administration has placed more credibility in the prose of fiction writer Michael Crichton than in the research of leading scientists. In fact, some scientists within the Bush Administration who have documented climate change claim that they were silenced by political appointees. President Bush has endangered us all by making a mockery out of such an urgent problem.

States and cities are stepping up to act where the Bush Administration has not, establishing cap and trade programs, working towards carbon neutrality, and investing in renewable energy sources. We all share an obligation to promote conservation and to reduce our environmental footprint.

This Earth Day, the United States must reclaim the mantle of conservation and environmentalism, finding aggressive ways to slow climate change and encouraging

developing countries to follow course. If the Bush Administration continues to put politics before science, all of humanity will pay a price.

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