

APRIL 19, 2005

SCHAKOWSKY JOINS DEMOCRATIC COLLEAGUES TO ISSUE EARTH DAY REPORT; SAYS BUSH ADMINISTRATION POLICIES ARE BAD FOR OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FUTURE

WASHINGTON, DC -- U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today joined several of her colleagues to discuss the release of the Earth Day Report and admonish the Bush Administration's lacking environmental policies.

"I am proud to stand here today with my colleagues, all of them dedicated to a clean environment and healthy future for our children and for generations to come. I want to thank Congressman Blumenauer for organizing this event and for his leadership. There is no greater leader in the Congress when it comes to standing up for our environment."

"Today, with the release of this report, we rededicate ourselves to the fight for a core Democratic and a core American value: Protecting our Children; Protecting our Future."

"This report we are releasing today does not document every assault the Bush Administration has launched on our environment, but it includes the most egregious. And Democrats are here to say we are fighting back."

"We will continue to fight President Bush and his Republican allies in the Congress to prevent them from further:

- Weakening Clean Air Rules
- Damaging our fresh water supply-the Bush budget cuts over \$16 million from Illinois, my home state's, clean water revolving fund
- Protecting those who pollute the most
- Endangering our most precious public lands and natural treasures

As the 35th annual Earth Day approaches, we stand here as Democrats to say that we have had enough and Mother Earth has had enough. In the 21st century, in a nation with the greatest resources and technology, we have an opportunity and a responsibility to strike bold new and forward thinking policies and to set an example for the world to follow. We should be a shining global leader of environmental stewardship. Instead, under the Republicans and the Bush Administration, our nation is forced to continue the same old policies of dig, burn and pollute."

"Since coming to office, President Bush has talked a lot about children and the need to protect them. But his agenda tells a different story. It is undeniably the worst environmental record of any president in our lifetimes. And this report documents the very worst of the President's anti-environmental policies and those put forth by his allies in the Congress. They have sought to dismantle the most critical, lasting and bipartisan laws that were set up to protect our environment, our well-being and our children's future."

"One of the worst insults on our environment and our children's health is the Bush Administration's new mercury rule. The Bush administration weakened public health protections by announcing the so-called "Utility Mercury Reductions" that would actually allow polluters to avoid cleaning up mercury pollution."

"The proposal means three times more mercury will be introduced into the environment for decades longer than if we would simply enforce our current clean air protections."

"The Bush mercury rule change delays any mercury reduction spewed from coal burning power plants until 2010 and allows 26 tons in 2010 and 15 tons in 2018. By contrast, tougher regulations under the existing Clean Air Act could reduce the level of emission to 5 tons by 2008, a 90 percent overall reduction."

"EPA records show that 44 states already have fish consumption advisories for mercury, the most in history. Ohio and Pennsylvania are among 15 states that have all of their inland lakes and rivers under advisory. And Michigan is one of 18 states that have all of their inland lakes under advisory."

"The Bush Administration is taking our policies and our planet in the wrong direction when it

comes to the environment and this report is proof."