

111TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 255

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas Gaylord Nelson, former United States Senator from Wisconsin, is recognized as one of the leading environmentalists of the 20th Century who helped launch an international era of environmental awareness and activism;

Whereas Gaylord Nelson grew up in Clear Lake, Wisconsin, and rose to national prominence while exemplifying the progressive values instilled in him;

Whereas Gaylord Nelson served with distinction in the Wisconsin State Senate from 1949 to 1959, as Governor of the State of Wisconsin from 1959 to 1963, and in the United States Senate from 1963 to 1981;

Whereas Gaylord Nelson founded Earth Day, which was first celebrated on April 22, 1970, by 20 million people across the United States, making the celebration the largest environmental grassroots event in history at that time;

Whereas Gaylord Nelson called on Americans to hold their elected officials accountable for protecting their health and the natural environment on that first Earth Day, an action which launched the Environmental Decade, an unparalleled period of legislative and grassroots activity that resulted in passage of 28 major pieces of environmental legislation from 1970 to 1980, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the National Environmental Education Act;

Whereas Gaylord Nelson was responsible for legislation that created the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore and the St. Croix Wild and Scenic Riverway and protected other important Wisconsin and national treasures;

Whereas Gaylord Nelson sponsored legislation to ban phosphates in household detergents and to ban the use of Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), and he worked tirelessly to ensure clean water and clean air for all Americans;

Whereas in addition to his environmental leadership, Gaylord Nelson fought for civil rights, enlisted for the War on Poverty, challenged drug companies and tire manufacturers to protect consumers, and stood up to Senator Joe

McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee to defend and protect civil liberties;

Whereas Gaylord Nelson was a patriot, who as a young soldier honorably served 46 months in the Armed Forces during World War II, and then, as Senator, worked to ban the use of the toxic defoliant Agent Orange;

Whereas, in 1995, Gaylord Nelson was awarded the highest honor accorded civilians in the United States, the Presidential Medal of Freedom;

Whereas Gaylord Nelson's legacy includes generations of Americans who have grown up with an environmental ethic and an appreciation and understanding of their roles as stewards of the environment and the planet; and

Whereas Gaylord Nelson was an extraordinary statesman, public servant, environmentalist, husband, father, and friend, and who never let disagreement on the issues become personal or partisan: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2 *concurring)*, That Congress commemorates the 40th anni-
- 3 versary of Earth Day and honors the founder of Earth
- 4 Day, the late Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin.

Passed the House of Representatives April 21, 2010.

Attest:

Clerk.

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Commemorating the 40th anniversary of Earth Day
and honoring the founder of Earth Day, the late
Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin.