



Congressman Mark Kirk's Special Report



Tenth Congressional District

September 2007

Save Our Lake



Stop Dumping in Our Lake

Congressmen introduce legislation to stop cities from dumping sewage in the Great Lakes

Joined by local and national environmental leaders, U.S. Reps. Mark Kirk and Dan Lipinski announced bipartisan legislation that would ban sewage dumping in the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes Water Protection Act will dramatically increase penalties for coastal cities that dump sewage into lake systems.



Kirk leads campaign against BP-refinery dumping

(ABC 7) CHICAGO: U.S. Congressman Mark Kirk boarded a boat Friday to take a closer look at the area where the Whiting, Indiana oil refinery wants to release waste water. The refinery is expected to discharge 1,500 pounds of ammonia and 4,900 pounds of extra sludge every day. Before an expansion project is finished, Kirk plans to bring up the issue on Capitol Hill.

July 20, 2007

**UPDATE:
BP Backing
Down**



U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk recently explained the bipartisan legislation that would ban sewage dumping in the Great Lakes.

Kirk Announces Shoreline Mayors Task Force

Introduces anti-pollution legislation



During the initial meeting of his Shoreline Mayors Task Force, Congressman Kirk announced the first legislative action to force BP to withdraw its plan to increase ammonia and industrial waste dumping in Lake Michigan (photo, left). Kirk's bill will deny capital expense tax credits to any refinery that increases net pollution into the Great Lakes. Kirk also co-sponsored H. Con. Res. 187, a resolution condemning BP for its plan to increase dumping in Lake Michigan, that overwhelmingly passed by a vote of 387-26.

"If BP does not protect Lake Michigan, then Congress should step in and provide protection," said Congressman Kirk.

"Each year, more than 24 billion gallons of sewage are dumped into the source of drinking water for 30 million Americans," he continued. "Detroit is the primary culprit, with more than 13 billion gallons dumped annually. We need to bring coastal cities in line with Chicago's water treatment reforms to ensure that we stop poisoning our water supply."

Protect Our Lake

BP is backing down...for now

Protecting Lake Michigan is one of my top priorities in Congress. I was stunned to learn that British Petroleum (BP) planned to dump more ammonia and industrial waste into the lake because they cannot find extra space in a \$3.8 billion upgrade of their Indiana refinery.

It appears that BP may back down on its plans to add new pollution to the lake. They are finally responding to the petitions and legislation that convinced BP they should not carry out this plan.

I grew up on the shores of Lake Michigan. I learned to swim and sail a Sunfish in her waters. The lake nearly took my life at a young age and taught me an important lesson about the powerful forces of nature and the defining moments that the course of our future.

After learning of BP's action, U.S. Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-IL) and I, along with 17 other members, asked the EPA to pull the permit for BP. I formed the Shoreline Mayors Task Force to address the BP issue and engage other shoreline environmental issues including: beach closings, sewage dumping, mercury pollution, shoreline bluff protection, asbestos contamination and PCB remediation.

I am glad that BP is backing down. Indiana's Governor should pull the permit he never should have granted to BP. BP should have a legal obligation to live up to the millions of dollars it spends convincing the public that it is environmentally friendly. Economic development is no excuse for jeopardizing the millions of people who depend on the Great Lakes for clean drinking water.

Congress should enact legislation to ban all dumping in the Great Lakes. I introduced bipartisan legislation to establish that federal ban. Given the impact BP's original plans would have had on the lake, this action is timely and warranted.

Kirk

110TH CONGRESS

1ST SESSION H. CON. RES. 187

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that –

- Congress expresses its disapproval of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's issuance of a permit allowing BP to increase their daily dumping of ammonia and total suspended solids into Lake Michigan;
- Congress urges the State of Indiana to reconsider issuance of a permit allowing BP to increase their daily dumping of ammonia and total suspended solids into Lake Michigan;
- Congress should take action to protect and restore the Great Lakes;
- The United States Environmental Protection Agency's actions in the Great Lake basin should be consistent with the goal of preserving and restoring the Great Lakes; and
- The United States Environmental Protection Agency should not allow increased dumping of chemicals and pollutants into the Great Lakes.

Representatives Kirk and Bean Host Second Suburban Transportation Commission

Suburban sales tax increases, funds for Metra expansion key topics

Representatives Mark Kirk and Melissa Bean, along with state and local suburban leaders, hosted the second meeting of the bipartisan Suburban Transportation Commission in June to discuss the Illinois General Assembly's proposed sales tax increase on suburban families, along with funding needs for important suburban transportation improvements. If the proposed new tax is approved, half the suburban revenue would go to the RTA and half would return to each county. Of the \$400 million in new suburban tax revenue going to the RTA, 60 percent would be for the CTA.



Representatives Kirk and Bean host the second meeting of the Suburban Transportation Commission.

"Transit money should support planning and infrastructure for growing suburban communities," said Kirk. "Failure to fund Metra's STAR Line or the Union Pacific Northwest Line expansion project would result in millions of federal dollars left unused. If the state cancels its local match, we will lose federal dollars, providing no hope for gridlocked commuters. To build our future economy, we have to fight gridlock in our new population center — suburban communities."

The Suburban Transportation Commission was created in April to address the changing demographics and transportation needs of suburban communities. The Commission is meeting on a variety of issues important to suburban communities, including public transportation.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"Any time you start putting more pollution into the lake, it's a concern."

North Chicago Mayor Leon Rockingham, who joined officials from Highland Park, Highwood, Kenilworth, Lake Forest, Waukegan and Wilmette at the first Shoreline Mayors Task Force meeting to address lake issues such as pollution.

Daily Herald

Lawmakers warn of impending transit needs

Federal lawmakers from the suburbs railed against the Chicago Transit Authority Monday, while also calling on the governor to find cash to expand Metra... "We need a financial integrity upgrade for the CTA," said U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk, a Highland Park Republican, following a hearing he held on suburban transit with U.S. Rep. Melissa Bean, a Barrington Democrat.

June 26, 2007

Keeping Airports Safe

In response to security concerns at O'Hare and airports throughout the nation, Representatives Mark Kirk and Dan Lipinski included an amendment to the Homeland Security funding bill that targets contractors who fail to account for identification badges of former employees. The amendment would fine contractors who do not collect security badges from former employees.

Since 2004 more than 3,600 security badges have gone missing at O'Hare. The badges are the only identification necessary for independent contractors to enter the airport's most secure areas, including the airfield.

"This casual attitude toward reclaiming security badges is not acceptable," Congressman Kirk said. "We must know with certainty who has unrestricted access to the airport, terminals, baggage and aircraft, and if they remain trustworthy and authorized to work in a secure area."



Reopened gate harbors North Chicago hope

Kirk sees strong Navy hand in downtown revival

WAUKEGAN NEWS-SUN: U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk and Mayor Leon Rockingham joined with navy, state and county officials to formally open the newly renovated gate and intersection at Sheridan Road and Martin Luther King Drive, which is expected to bring thousands of sailors and civilians to nearby Sheridan Crossing, the city's planned 40-acre retail development. Kirk, who pledged his support "to expand jobs and opportunity" in North Chicago, thanked Rockingham and Alderman Jim Ellis for their work on the project as well as former alderman Mike Miceli, who proposed the project.

June 12, 2007

SURVEY SAID

Over 7,000 people responded to our recent key issues survey and we thank you for your thoughtful input. Below find a summary of your replies:

61% Said no to a proposed immigration bill that would have created two new visas: a "Z" visa for 12 million illegal immigrants to remain in the U.S. and a "Y" visa to admit 400,000 additional temporary workers.

33% Thought with regard to reducing carbon dioxide emission in America that the United States should renegotiate international agreements to require similar reduction by China and India to prevent industries from leaving this country.

42% Believed that the Alternative Minimum Tax should be increased for higher incomes and eliminated for middle class incomes.

39% Thought with regard to Iraq that Congress should cut funding for the Iraqi government unless it meets benchmarks for political reconciliation, oil revenue sharing and the demobilization of militias by August 2007.

23% Believed that with regard to Iran mastering technology to enrich weapons-grade uranium the United States should take two approaches: quarantine gasoline sales to Iran and support measures only approved by the United Nations.

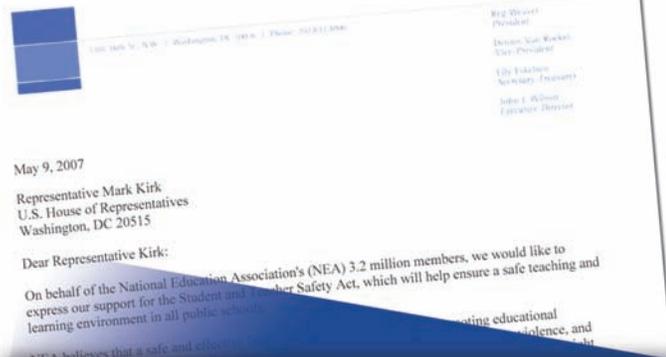
36% Supported reforming No Child Left Behind, preserving its basic parts but reforming problems in assessing special education, non-English speaking students and very small sub-group children.

53% Supported legislation to provide federal funds to help local law enforcement investigate and prosecute hate crimes.

28% Thought the United States should rely on U.N. sanctions only regarding the genocide in Darfur.

31% Said the United States should increase tariffs on Chinese products until China floats its currency and closes the large trade deficit.

32% Believed the government should increase federal research for alternative fuels and fuel cells to deal with rising gas prices.



May 9, 2007

On behalf of the National Education Association's (NEA) 3.2 million members, we would like to express our support for the Student and Teacher Safety Act, which will ensure a safe teaching and learning environment in all public schools...Your bill will help promote a safe school environment by requiring districts to have in place policies addressing reasonable student searches...We believe that such policies will help ensure that classrooms, school buildings, school property, and students remain free from the threat of weapons and other dangerous materials...

Sincerely,
Diane Shust
Director of Government Relations



Kirk Breaks Ground on New VA/Navy Hospital

Construction of \$100 million joint hospital begins with new parking facility

Shown here with Navy officials, Veterans Affairs (VA) officials and local veterans, Congressman Kirk broke ground on the first-ever joint Navy/VA hospital in North Chicago on July 2. Once completed, the joint VA/Navy hospital will improve health care for over 50,000 veterans, 40,000 sailors, 30,000 dependents and 10,000 military retirees living in Northern Illinois. Nearly 10 years ago, the VA planned to close the hospital and move treatment facilities to downtown Chicago. Following the announcement, Kirk worked with local veterans groups to save the hospital and combine Navy and VA services. The \$100 million hospital is expected to open in 2010.

Chicago Tribune

Lawmakers talk the talk with constituents

A traditional town hall meeting might draw 100 people, said Rep. Mark Kirk, who has conducted 15 telephone town halls in the last year. A good telephone town hall snares a couple of thousand listeners, including 500 or more who stick around for the entire thing... "It is complete digital democracy," Kirk said. "Given how busy people are, it's a 21st Century adaptation of a classic American concert of people standing before their congressmen and asking whatever is on their minds."

August 6, 2007

PIONEER PRESS

Editorial: BP Lake Dumping

The House voted 387-26 to condemn the plan on a resolution co-sponsored by U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk. As of Wednesday, top EPA officials made no move to stop the permit. Kirk will be attacked by his foes for posturing on environmental protection...but has consistently made the Lake one of his concerns. And he is right as rain on this one. The Lake IS our gem, a source of drinking water for millions of Americans, and an asset to be protected...

August 2, 2007

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

Editorial: Sink BP's Waste Plan

News of Indiana's action caught Chicago and Illinois officials by surprise and spurred a strong reaction. Representatives Mark Kirk and Daniel Lipinski said they would try to block the expansion unless it includes better pollution controls.

June 20, 2007

Chicago Tribune

Editorial: Messing with Lake Michigan

...We like jobs. We like gasoline. But this page's policy on dumping any more pollution into Lake Michigan isn't tangled in skeins of regulation or submerged in legal jargon. It's this: No. No more polluting of the lake. Now U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin and U.S. Reps. Rahm Emanuel and Mark Kirk are leaning on the U.S. EPA to put a hold on the permit until they get answers to a raft of questions. Chicago is also joining the fight. BP and federal and state regulators look to have followed the letter of the law in this case, but the result is, as Kirk aptly put it, "stunningly boneheaded."...

June 20, 2007

Chicago Tribune

BP takes lumps on Hill

Republicans and Democrats from Illinois warned throughout the day that BP would lose any fight over Great Lakes pollution and that the company was risking an environmentally friendly image it promotes heavily in advertising campaigns. "I told Mr. Malone that BP will not win this battle," said Rep. Mark Kirk. "For my purposes, this bipartisan meeting was to discuss the terms of surrender for BP?"

June 25, 2007

The NewsSun

Editorial: A lake in danger

U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk has taken a step to address this with the formation this week of the Shoreline Mayors Task Force, a group whose membership includes Waukegan, North Chicago, Lake Bluff, Lake Forest, Highwood and Highland Park, along with counterparts in Cook County. The panel will tackle a wide range of lake issues including beach closings, sewage dumping, asbestos, and mercury and PCB contamination. At the same time, he has introduced an amendment to a congressional energy package that would deny tax credits to refineries that increase pollution into the Great Lakes. Now that really would scare a multinational company with billions in the bank.

August 1, 2007

Daily Herald

Editorial: BP's lake dumping plan unacceptable

..."I think BP now stands for bad polluter," Kirk said when taking media representatives on a boat tour to the refinery. "They need to be called out on their corporate hypocrisy." He refers to the company's efforts to market itself as environmentally friendly... In the meantime, we also will support Kirk's continued efforts to promote even stricter controls on dumping into the lake than what the 1970's federal Clean Air Act was able to do.

June 21, 2007

Chicago Tribune

Eight towns stand up against BP plan

Mayors from eight North Shore communities joined U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk on Monday in announcing plans to fight the proposed discharge of significantly more ammonia and industrial waste into Lake Michigan by the massive BP oil refinery in Whiting, Ind., after years of effort to clean up the Great Lakes. "If pollution is allowed to increase in the Great Lakes, there's something wrong with the system," he said.

July 31, 2007

Mayors Dump On BP's Plan For Lake Michigan

(NBC 5) CHICAGO: At a task force hearing, Rep. Mark Kirk read off contaminants that he said would end up in Lake Michigan if and when BP begins dumping more waste into the lake from its refinery in Whiting, Ind. Kirk, as well as 10 other mayors from communities along the lakeshore, confronted federal Environmental Protection Agency officials. "Permits should not have been issued — increased review should have happened," Kirk said.

July 31, 2007



Nine area students to attend Navy, Military and Air Force Academies

Congressman Kirk is pictured above with 10th Congressional District students who will attend United States military academies in the fall. The appointees are, from left to right: Karl Mohrmann, Lake Bluff; Thomas Allman, Highland Park; Jacob Roche, Wilmette; Abraham Bailin, Deerfield; Josephine Kim, Glenview; Matthew Raygoza, Arlington Heights; Kyle Tomaszewski, Hoffman Estates; Jonathan Kim, Northbrook. Not pictured is Michelle Abruzzo, Inverness. Students must be nominated by a U.S. senator or member of the House of Representatives to be considered for appointment to one of the academies.

Honoring a Local Hero

At an event in Arlington Heights on Memorial Day, Congressman Kirk (below) presented Lake Bluff resident James Kinzer with several medals that he earned for World War II service. After contacting the congressional office, Mr. Kinzer learned he was eligible for medals that he never received, including the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with three oak leaves, the American Campaign Medal, the European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with three bronze stars, and the WWII Victory Medal. Mr. Kinzer's story is a familiar one in the 10th Congressional District. If you are a veteran, or a veteran's family member, please contact the Northbrook office at (847) 940-0202 regarding medal requests, or any questions about services offered through the Department of Veterans Affairs.



HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

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For Help With Federal Issues

like Medicare, Social Security, veterans' benefits or passports, please call our Northbrook office.



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