

The original documents are located in Box D30, folder “Rotary Club, Belding, MI, August 31, 1970” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR RELEASE AT 12 NOON--
Monday, August 31, 1970

Excerpts from a Speech by Rep. Gerald R. Ford before the Belding Rotary Club

Belding, Mich., may well prove to be a model for hundreds of communities across the Nation.

This is because Belding is the scene of a "first" in America's fight against water pollution. Belding is the location of a sewage treatment facility which will be the first of its kind in the country--a facility featuring spray irrigation of a municipal nursery and agricultural acreage with effluent from sewage oxidation ponds.

I am pleased to have had a hand in gaining approval of a \$120,000 Federal grant for this project--a Federal grant which is being combined with \$70,000 in City funds to pay for the new facility.

I congratulate Belding on pioneering with the spray-irrigation sewage system. What is significant about the method being used in Belding is that it is a 100 per cent effective system and it also has beneficial end products which will offset operating costs.

As you know, the waste water will be cleaned of phosphates and nitrates and those two chemicals will be used through the spray system to fertilize and irrigate the municipal nursery. Trees, shrubs and sod will be grown, but there will also be test plots for various crops.

It appears to me that the Belding project will lead the way for countless other communities throughout the country. The importance of the project cannot be over-emphasized.

All of us who are tremendously concerned about environmental pollution will be watching the Belding project with special attention.

We are determined, too, that the Nation shall make the fastest practical progress in eliminating all of our environmental problems.

I personally have sponsored seven bills that touch all aspects of our environment.

In the fight to abate water pollution, the bills I have introduced would authorize \$4 billion to cover the Federal share of a \$10 billion program for the construction of municipal waste treatment plants. If we are going to make headway

(more)

toward cleaning up Lake Michigan, for instance, every community on the lake must have good waste treatment plants.

One of my bills would establish an Environmental Financing Authority to insure that every municipality can finance its share of treatment plant construction. It also encourages the construction of large-scale regional treatment facilities.

My legislation also extends the Federal-State Water Quality Standards to include precise standards for all industrial and municipal sources, provides for court action for violation of standards with fines of up to \$10,000 a day, and extends pollution control authority to include all navigable waters. The bill further provides operating grants of from \$10 million to \$30 million (by 1975) to State pollution control agencies.

My Clean Air Bill establishes and implements national clean air standards.

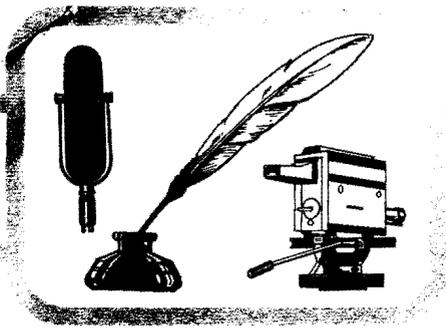
In the area of recreation, the environmental preservation program I have introduced would provide \$327 million to fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund. It provides for a review of federally owned real estate to find properties that can be converted to public recreational facilities.

My recreation area bill would authorize the Interior Department to convey to the states and local government surplus property for park and recreational purposes and would provide assistance to state and local government to use idle farmland for recreational purposes. The bill would also provide for longterm contracts with owners of idle farmlands for reforestation and any other improvements for public recreational use.

We need to pass all of this legislation. Programs of this kind will be a giant step toward cleaning up our Nation.

To date the U.S. House of Representatives has moved on three important fronts in an effort to improve the environmental quality of our lives. First, on June 10, the House passed the Clean Air Act, with new authority for establishing nationwide air quality standards and including the control of automotive and aircraft emissions. Then, on June 23, the House approved the Resource Recovery Act of 1970. This was the Solid Waste Act, which I sponsored. It provides for a three-year \$450 million expansion of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, including the development of new technologies for handling solid waste. Finally, on June 24, the House approved a Public Works Appropriation Bill including \$1 billion for the construction of waste treatment facilities.

These bills are a good beginning but we must continue to be sensitive to our environmental problems and to respond fully to the Nation's environmental needs. Further constructive actions must be forthcoming. Our very survival is at stake.



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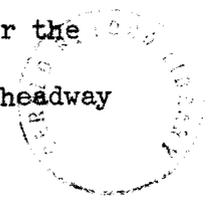
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