

110TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 450

Recognizing Rachel Carson, ecologist and author whose courage, selfless spirit, and sense of wonder ushered in the modern environmental movement.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 24, 2007

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. CARSON, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HONDA, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LANTOS, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

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## RESOLUTION

Recognizing Rachel Carson, ecologist and author whose courage, selfless spirit, and sense of wonder ushered in the modern environmental movement.

Whereas 100 years ago, on May 27, 1907, Rachel Carson was born on a small family farm in western Pennsylvania;

Whereas many consider her to be the patron saint of the modern environmental movement;

Whereas Rachel Carson died of breast cancer at the young age of 56, but her influence continues to reverberate, now

more than 40 years later, in the ongoing struggle to reconcile mankind's relationship with a healthy environment;

Whereas Rachel Carson published significant works of literature, including "Under the Sea-Wind", "The Sea Around Us", "The Edge of the Sea", "The Sense of Wonder", and the landmark book "Silent Spring", which created a new awareness among citizens and government agencies of the hazards associated with certain pesticides and their effects on natural ecosystems;

Whereas when it was an extremely unpopular choice to expose the dangers of certain pesticides, in particular the previously lauded and indiscriminately used pesticide DDT, Rachel Carson courageously stood behind her scientific research and stood up to the chemical industry, depicting how life on all levels, from the bottom of the food chain to mankind at the top, was being dramatically altered by chemical pollution;

Whereas the environmental discussion prompted by "Silent Spring" led President John F. Kennedy to appoint a special Science Advisory Committee, which subsequently affirmed her findings;

Whereas Rachel Carson's tireless efforts, including testimony before Congress, led to an eventual ban on DDT and in turn a resurgence of many ecosystems and wildlife species in the United States, including the symbol of American strength and grace, the bald eagle;

Whereas initially Time Magazine dismissed Rachel Carson's work as "oversimplifications", and in some cases "patently unsound", she remained steadily resolute and was later ranked among Time Magazine's list of the 100 most important people of the 21st century;

Whereas her approach brought forward the principles of ecological protection and the need for humanity to think within the context of the ecosystem at large;

Whereas Rachel Carson's efforts were driven neither by desire for profit nor power, but rather a deep appreciation for humanity and the interconnected world within which we live, as exemplified by the following excerpt from her book "The Sense of Wonder": "If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder without any such gift from the fairies, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.";

Whereas Rachel Carson was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian award; and

Whereas Rachel Carson's words of wisdom are as—if not more—appropriate now as they were in 1962 when she wrote in "Silent Spring": "The human race is challenged more than ever before to demonstrate our mastery—not over nature but of ourselves.": Now, therefore, be it

- 1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2               (1) recognizes the significance of the centennial
- 3               of the birth of Rachel Carson;
- 4               (2) commends Rachel Carson for her contribu-
- 5               tions to science, literature, and the health of the nat-
- 6               ural environment all over the world; and
- 7               (3) recognizes that we could learn much from
- 8               her today, especially as we increasingly feel the ef-
- 9               fects of climate change and consider measures to

- 1      lessen and eventually reverse the impact it has on
- 2      our planet.

