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House of Representatives

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY IN OUR MILITARY!

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Speaker, I have introduced the Military Environmental Responsibility Act, H.R. 332. The purpose of this bill is to require the Department of Defense to fully comply with Federal and State environmental laws.

Military exemptions from requirements and enforcement provisions under environment, public safety, and worker protection laws harm the environment and human health. Our constituents who border military bases should have the same protections as other municipalities.

This bill will not compromise military readiness. Environmental laws currently include exemptions for the military in the event of "paramount interest of the United States". These exemptions have only been used a handful of times, and the President would retain that authority over this legislation.

Americans believe that their government should be accountable to them and play by the same rules that they have to follow. Much of the cynicism and apathy of recent years can be traced directly to public perception that government officials and agencies are not accountable to anyone. We can only begin to restore faith in government and participation in democracy by ensuring that the federal government works under the same laws and regulations as private businesses and individuals.