

Dear Friend:

I am pleased to be working for you in Congress where I am fighting for a healthier environment for our families. Reports show that environmental problems can lead to higher rates of diseases like asthma, birth defects and cancer. We can fight these diseases by cleaning up our air, water and land. I will continue to be an advocate in Congress so that the families of the San Gabriel Valley and East Los Angeles can enjoy better health.



Sincerely,

*Hilda L. Solis*

HILDA L. SOLIS  
Member of Congress

## CONGRESSWOMAN SOLIS APPOINTED RANKING MEMBER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SUBCOMMITTEE

On February 3, 2003, Congresswoman Solis was appointed Ranking Democratic Member on the Environment and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

As leading Democrat on the Subcommittee, Solis said of her new position, "I will use this appointment to help the San Gabriel Valley and East Los Angeles, where we face polluted air, water and land. All of these issues impact the health of our families and polluters should be held accountable."

This subcommittee has jurisdiction over issues relevant in the San Gabriel Valley and East Los Angeles area such as environmental protection, the Safe Drinking Water Act, hazardous waste, toxic substances, Superfund, mining, and noise pollution control.

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Please visit my web site at <http://www.house.gov/solis>

*Hilda L. Solis*

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ECRWSS

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# CONGRESSWOMAN HILDA L. SOLIS



## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT

### CONGRESSWOMAN SOLIS' SAN GABRIEL RIVER STUDY BILL SIGNED INTO LAW

On July 1st, 2003, the San Gabriel River Watershed Study Act, introduced by Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis was signed into law (Public Law No. 108-042). The study will look for ways to preserve and restore open and green space and revitalize the area within the San Gabriel Mountains and along the San Gabriel River north of Santa Fe Springs.



*Congresswoman Solis announces the signing of the San Gabriel River Watershed Study Act, while local residents look on.*

"The bill signing is the first step in making sure that urban areas are not left behind and that we improve on our environment," said Congresswoman Solis. "I see a future where our community will have less health problems, kids will breathe easier, our water will be cleaner and our community will have a better overall quality of life."

This mailing was prepared, published and mailed at taxpayer expense.

## KEEPING OUR DRINKING WATER SAFE

Reports show that water contamination in the San Gabriel Valley has forced residents to be concerned about the quality of drinking water. Perchlorate, a by-product of rocket fuel, and methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), a chemical additive to gasoline, are polluting wells throughout California. Perchlorate can disrupt the thyroid gland, which can affect hormone levels that control the development of the fetus, and in young children it can affect brain function and motor skills. MTBE is known to cause cancer and other health problems.

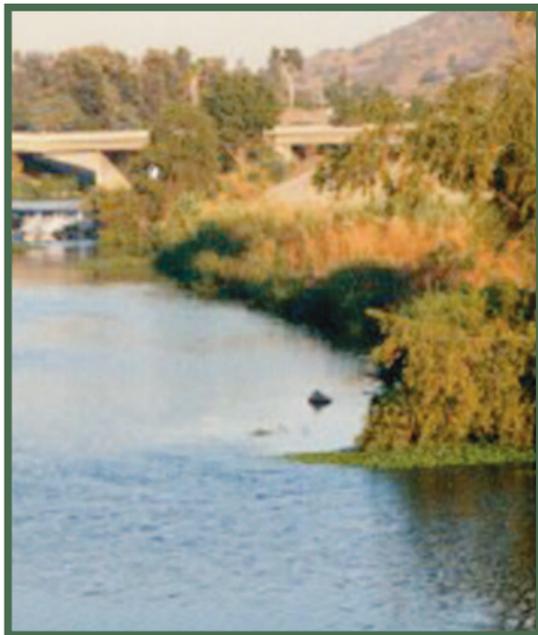


*Congresswoman Hilda Solis speaks about the environment at a press conference with Congressman Allen, Senator Jeffords, Representative Dingell and Representative Rahall.*

Congresswoman Solis is currently working in her capacity as Ranking Member of the House Environment and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee to bring attention to this issue and ensure that those who contaminate water supplies are held responsible for cleanup. Recently, she joined Congressman John Dingell (MI-15) in asking the Department of Defense to look at contamination from its bases and to

inform the public about its plans for monitoring perchlorate in the environment. She also authored a proposal to the National Energy Policy Act (H.R. 4) to provide \$850 million dollars for clean up of leaking underground storage tanks that are contaminated with MTBE.

“The quality of our water directly impacts the quality of our families’ health,” said Congresswoman Solis.



*The San Gabriel River.*

## GRAVEL PITS STUDIED

Recently, Congresswoman Solis and Congressman Henry Waxman (CA-30) released a report about the health and environmental impacts of the gravel pit industry in the San Gabriel Valley. The report revealed that there is a vast shortage of information about the quarries' impacts on air and water quality in our community.



“According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, asthma accounts for 10 million missed school days, 1.2 million emergency room visits, and 500,000 hospitalizations each year,” Solis said. “We owe it to our children to find out if the gravel industry is contributing to these health problems.”



Since the report's release, the South Coast Air Quality Management District has started to conduct more thorough air quality tests so that we can better understand how the gravel quarry industry impacts our families. In addition, the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District is working with the gravel industry to explore safe ways to use the pits after they can no longer be mined.



*Congresswoman Solis discusses the Curve Fire with United States Forest Service Forest Supervisor Judy Cook. Before it was contained, the Curve Fire burned almost 21,000 acres in the Angeles National Forest. Congresswoman Solis personally recognized the efforts of over 3,000 people who helped fight the Curve Fire in the U.S. House of Representatives.*

## CONGRESSWOMAN SOLIS' BILL ENDORSED BY U.S. SENATE

On April 7, 2003, Congresswoman Solis' César Estrada Chavez Lands Legacy Study Act (H.R. 1034) was approved by the U. S. Senate. The bill would allow the National Park Service to honor Chavez's legacy by preserving the areas in California and Arizona that have special significance in the life of Chavez. Chavez led peaceful demonstrations with fellow farmworkers against harsh labor and environmental conditions.

“I am hopeful that this will educate future generations about the leadership of César Chavez. His life is an example of unselfish commitment to social and environmental justice and respect for human dignity,” said Congresswoman Solis.

The Senate bill was introduced by Senator John McCain (AZ).



## PREVENTING TOXIC LEAKS

Studies show that leaking underground storage tanks, usually found at gas stations, can pollute our water supplies with toxic chemicals found in gasoline. Congresswoman Solis has been active in the fight to clean up these tanks and prevent further spills from occurring. From her position as the lead Democrat on the Environment and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee she held a hearing to hear from experts on the problems associated with leaking underground storage tanks.

After the hearing, Congresswoman Solis noted, “Our community has at least 146 leaking underground fuel tanks that need to be cleaned up. We need to take those steps today and strengthen the current program to ensure that communities are protected.”