

Madam Speaker, on the floor of the House we regularly deal with problems and tragedies. Recently, we have been contending with the horrible consequences of the hurricanes in Florida. But the greatest tragedy in the world today is seldom mentioned here on this floor. Between 2 and 5 million people each year die needlessly because of a lack of access to clean water and adequate sanitation, up to 10,000 people a day and even more tragically over 4,000 children each and every day. Eighty percent of all illness in the developing world is water related, and at any given time, half the population is sick from water-related disease.

Inadequate sanitation makes worse the problems of poverty, disease, bio-diversity loss, climate change impact and general environmental degradation.

In the developing world, 90 to 95 percent of household wastes are released untreated into streams, open drains, lake, rivers and coastal waters and lead to wider environmental problems. Many young women in the developing world are not able to go to school because of how much time they spend just getting the water supply for their family.

The magnitude is difficult to comprehend. More than 1.1 billion people lack access to safe drinking water. One in six of the world's population and more than 2.3 billion, one in three, lack access to adequate sanitation.

We have established under the United Nations' Sustainable Development Conference goals, that we are going to reduce by one-half the people in this desperate status. In order to achieve the targets we are going to have to supply 175,000 people a day for the next 10 years with drinking water and sanitation targets for 400,000 people a day. Yet this is a problem that can be solved. We know what to do. We know how to do it. Yes, it will cost tens of billions of dollars. But just in the United States each year, we spend \$61 billion on soft drinks, \$71 billion on beer, \$23 billion on bottled water.

Do we think that the United States can help provide 4 cents a day per person to be able to stop the ravages of water borne disease? Indeed, if the developing world would step up to do its share, it would not even be 4 cents a day because, already, in these troubled countries people are spending an inordinate amount of money on inadequate water supplies. It would be just 2 cents a day extra if the developed world would meet its responsibilities, less than the price of a take-out pizza every year.

I urge Members of the House to consider this issue. This month marks the second

Inadequate Sanitation Kills Millions, Must be Prevented

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anniversary of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg when we made this commitment--the United States and 185 other countries to reduce the population in need by one-half.

We have a resolution, H. Res. 782, that reaffirms this commitment, commending the President's initiative, Water For the Poor. It calls for increased efforts by the United States and all developed countries for allocating water aid to the communities with the greatest need and to communities where it can make the largest difference. It requests the administration to report to Congress on efforts that we make to keep this commitment.

On the second anniversary of the resolution, it is important for us to keep our eye on the ball, to make progress in incremental steps to help prevent tragedy on this global proportion. The resolution has already been bipartisan sponsorship of over 25 Members. We urge Members to cosponsor H. Res. 782.