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## **Press Release - Muskie Statement on Earth Day 1972**

Edmund S. Muskie

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# MUSKIE News

1972 K STREET, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

TELEPHONE (202) USA 1972

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CONTACT:

Dick Stewart  
Hadley Roff

## MUSKIE STATEMENT ON EARTH DAY 1972

Senator Edmund S. Muskie, commemorating the third national Earth Day, issued the following statement today (April 17) from his Washington D.C. office:

Two years ago this week, people gathered throughout the United States for the first Earth Day. On April 22, 1970, hundreds of thousands assembled to demand a better quality of life and to protest the destruction of our air, water and land.

Two years ago, the President proclaimed that "It is now or never" for the environment.

Two years ago, Congress responded to the President's plea by enacting the toughest air pollution control legislation ever considered.

But today, the momentum for making a more livable nation has slowed:

--Electric power companies use pollution control requirements as excuses for failure to meet new power demands when, in almost every instance, poor planning and bad management are the real causes.

--Oil companies promote an artificial energy crisis to overcome environmental opposition to tapping off-shore oil reserves.

--Copper companies with White House support threaten plant closure rather than comply with state laws to clean up the air.

--Presidential aides side with private industry to weaken enforcement of the air pollution laws.

--And the Administration leads an effort to gut tough new water pollution legislation that was unanimously enacted by the Senate last fall.

White House leadership for a quality environment has faltered. Rather than "now or never," the President seems to be saying "not now, and maybe never."

Our precious environment deserves more protection than Presidential rhetoric. It deserves an Administration determined to stand up to those special interests hoping to delay or destroy environmental protection efforts, and willing to fight for the laws and resources needed to end pollution.

On Earth Day, 1972, the issue is not one of anti-pollution goals -- for they are clear. The issue is one of leadership. We must demand today and every day political leadership equal to the task of protecting and preserving our environment.

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