April 12, 1972

Dear Governor:

Recently I proclaimed the week of April 17-23 as national "Earth Week," and I would like to ask your assistance in making that period an occasion for all citizens to work together on improving and restoring our environment. Surely there could be few issues of greater moment to America.

As I observed in that proclamation, "The environmental awakening marks a new maturity in our attitudes toward the relationship of man to his surroundings.

...We have made a beginning in this new era of environmental enlightenment. But it is only a beginning. Every American and every citizen of the world must make a conscious and sustained effort if we are to succeed in protecting this earth which we all share."

At the Federal level, we have made a strong and irreversible commitment to this cause, setting up new agencies within the government, greatly increasing our financial support, and asking for a very large package of new laws, as set forth most recently in my message to Congress of February 8, 1972. I am most anxious that we now secure passage of these 24 pieces of legislation, for we must have the proper tools if we are to succeed in this task.

As you are aware, there is also a special need to enlist our young people in this effort. Their involvement will not only serve to renew our environment but should also be an important step in developing an informed and concerned citizenry. Last October I established the Environmental Merit Awards Program so that secondary school children could fulfill their deeply felt commitments; already, more than 2,500 high schools representing all 50 States have registered in this program.

During this coming Earth Week, I hope you will impress upon the citizens of your State how important it is that they seek a better understanding of environmental needs and opportunities on a continuing basis. Certainly we will achieve the quality of life that we want only if we make each and every day a part of Earth Week.

With best personal regards,
Sincerely,

RICHARD NIXON