



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Fourth Grader From Croton Named Winner of Senator Murphy's Earth Day Poster Contest

TERRENCE MURPHY May 7, 2018

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Croton-on-Hudson, NY - Now that spring is finally here, more families will be spending time outdoors swimming, playing sports or picnicking. Unfortunately, capitalizing on our leisure time also puts a strain on our natural resources, increasing pollution. This past Earth Day (April 22) saw a precipitous increase in the number of students taking responsibility for the future of the planet. Young students grades K-6 expressed their concerns for the ecology

through Senator Terrence Murphy's 2018 Earth Day Poster Contest.

The Senator's office received nearly 100 pieces of original artwork. This year's winner was Haashini Velmani, a 4th grader who attends the Carrie E. Tompkins School in Croton-on-Hudson.

This theme of the contest was "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle." Students were encouraged to create a poster that could be used as part of a campaign emphasizing the importance of recycling and waste reduction.

"Congratulations to all the participants in this year's contest, particularly to our winner, Haashini Velmani," said Senator Murphy. "All of the entries from my District displayed tremendous creativity as well a genuine and informed concern for our ecological future. We are all very proud of the students' work and their interest in increasing awareness about issues affecting our environment."

"I'm very excited one of our students won. We have inquisitive students who are well rounded, intellectual and artistic that care about the environment," Kelly Maloney, Principal for the Carrie E. Tompkins School stated. "Because the Hudson River is close by, we have taught them that they are the stewards of the river, that it is their river to cherish and care for."

This year's winner, Haashini Velmani said, "I was very surprised that I won. We learned a lot about the importance of Earth Day from our teachers, so I'm very happy that people appreciated what I was trying to say. My grandfather is an artist, who loves to draw and paint. My mother is also interested in art. I hope to continue to be an artist like them. I would also like to be a writer someday as well."

Ever since the first Earth Day in 1970, students have been expressing their concern for our planet's future through art, songs, and poetry. The idea for Earth Day grew out of an observation by Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin. After seeing the damage done by a massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California, Nelson was inspired to organize a national "teach-in" that focused on educating the public about the environment. The teach-in developed into Earth Day, which is now observed in more than 193 countries throughout the world. Each year more than 20 million Americans participate by helping to improve the air we breathe and the water we drink.

Since entering office in 2014, Senator Murphy has made improving New York's environment one of his primary initiatives. Last year, he approved a record amount of funding for the Environmental Protection Fund and secured a \$500,000 line item in the budget for a critically needed meadow restoration project at Croton Point Park. In addition, Senator Murphy has had more than a dozen lakes, rivers and streams in the Hudson Valley added to New York's inland waterway list and led the effort to test drinking water in New York's schools. He led the movement to keep the United States Coast Guard from approving barge anchorages along the Hudson River. Most recently, he secured a State grant for \$267,375 for The Croton-Hydrilla Control Project to stem the growth of harmful algal blooms in the Croton River.