

## Chairman Dingell at the Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials Markup on H.R. 1534, Mercury Export Ban Act of 2007

Statement of Congressman John D. Dingell, Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND  
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MARKUP ON  
H.R. 1534, MERCURY EXPORT BAN ACT OF 2007  
August 2, 2007

Mr. Chairman, those who live in the Great Lakes States, including the citizens of Michigan, know all too well the harmful effects of mercury contamination on these vital water bodies. The National Lake Fish Advisory data base for 2005 shows that more than 3,000 water bodies in the U.S. and Canadian Great Lakes Basin have fish advisories for mercury. This includes fish consumption advisories for each of the Great Lakes and connecting bodies of water, including the Detroit River, as well as statewide advisories for certain fish species in all rivers and lakes in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Illinois. All inland lakes in Michigan and Minnesota and all rivers in Indiana also have fish mercury consumption advisories.

Mercury is a transboundary pollutant. State officials tell us that mercury studies indicate that a large fraction of all mercury deposited in the U.S., ranging from about 60 percent to more than 80 percent, comes from global sources. The Environmental Protection Agency's long-range transport analysis predicts that the southern Great Lakes and the Ohio River Valley, the Northeast, and certain areas in the South will have the highest annual deposition rate of total mercury from U.S. and global sources combined.

H.R. 1534 addresses the issue of long-range mercury transport, requiring that the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense keep mercury stockpiles in storage and preventing the export of other supplies of elemental mercury into the global marketplace which will help to protect rivers and lakes in the United States.

Prevention of mercury exposure "an important goal of this bill" is the cornerstone of avoiding long-term health consequences. Reducing the global supply and demand for mercury and with that exposure to mercury vapors will go far in improving health for people throughout the world.

I commend Subcommittee Chairman Wynn and all members of the Subcommittee, particularly Mr. Allen, the chief sponsor of the bill, for their leadership in addressing this important health and environmental issue.

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