

## Wynn Calls for Senate Action on Mercury Export Bill

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NEWS RELEASE  
Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman

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Wynn Calls for Senate Action on Mercury Export Bill  
Says Reports of Sushi Contamination, Links to Cardiovascular Disease Underscore Need for Bill

Washington, D.C. — On the heels of media reports of mercury contamination in tuna sushi sold in New York and of recent evidence suggesting a link between mercury and cardiovascular disease in adults, a key Democratic lawmaker today called for passage of legislation aimed at preventing exposure to mercury. Rep. Al Wynn (D-MD), the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials, said that the U.S. Senate should pass the Mercury Export Ban Act of 2007, legislation that passed the House in November.

“Reports of mercury in sushi in New York are certainly unsettling,” Wynn said. “There also appears to be growing evidence that elevated mercury levels may be associated with cardiovascular disease. All of this news underscores the need to pass strong legislation to address mercury contamination.”

The Mercury Export Ban Act passed Wynn's Subcommittee in August and was approved by the full Energy and Commerce Committee in October. The House of Representatives passed the bill in November and the measure is now pending before the U.S. Senate. The bipartisan House-passed bill has broad support from the States, environmental community, and chemical and mining industries.

The legislation would place an export ban on elemental mercury beginning in the year 2010. The measure would also prevent Federal agencies from selling, distributing, or transferring elemental mercury, except for its transfer between Federal agencies to facilitate storage. The legislation would also create a long-term storage option for private sources of elemental mercury at a facility to be designated by the Secretary of Energy.

The New York Times reported Wednesday that tuna sushi from 20 Manhattan stores and restaurants contained such high mercury levels that, in most cases, consuming six pieces a week from the restaurant would exceed levels deemed acceptable by the Environmental Protection Agency. A separate story in Wednesday's Times noted that there is increasing evidence of a link between mercury consumption and cardiovascular disease.

Wynn added, "It has already been clear that mercury is a powerful neurotoxin that poses a significant risk to vulnerable populations such as infants and children. These more recent reports suggest that mercury may be a larger danger to adults than we were previously aware. I urge the Senate to swiftly move the Mercury Export Ban Act."

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Note: The letter was sent to Chairman Wynn in October in support of the Mercury Export Ban Act.

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Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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