

August 2, 1999

INTRODUCTION OF THE OMNIBUS
MERCURY EMISSIONS REDUC-
TION ACT OF 1999

HON. THOMAS H. ALLEN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, August 2, 1999

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Omnibus Mercury Emissions Reduction Act of 1999, a bill to reduce mercury emissions by 95 percent nationwide. I am pleased to be joined by 27 of my colleagues who have agreed to be original cosponsors of this important legislation.

Although mercury is a naturally occurring element, it has built up to dangerous levels in the environment. Mercury pollution impairs the reproductive and nervous systems of fish and wildlife, and can be extremely harmful when ingested by humans. It is especially dangerous to pregnant women, children and developing fetuses. Ingesting mercury can severely damage the central nervous system, causing numbness in extremities, impaired vision, kidney disease, and, in some cases, even death.

According to EPA's "Mercury Study Report to Congress," exposure to mercury poses a significant threat to human health, and concentrations of mercury in the environment are increasing. The report concludes that mercury pollution in the U.S. comes primarily from a few categories of combustion units and incinerators. Together, these sources emit more than 155 tons of mercury into our environment each year. These emissions can be suspended in the air for up to a year, and travel hundreds of miles before settling in bodies of water and soil.

Nearly every State confronts the health risks posed by mercury pollution, and the problem is growing. Just six years ago, 27 States had issued mercury advisories warning the public about consuming fish contaminated with mercury. Today, the number of States issuing advisories has risen to 40, and the number of water bodies covered by the warnings has nearly doubled. In some States, including my home State of Maine, every single river, lake, and stream is under a mercury advisory.

This growing problem has already prompted action at the State and regional level. Last year the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers enacted a plan to reduce emissions, educate the public and label products that contain mercury. Maine and Vermont have passed legislation to cut mercury pollution, and Massachusetts and New Jersey have enacted strict mercury emissions standards on waste incinerators.

Although there is a clear consensus that mercury pollution poses a serious threat, State and regional initiatives alone are not sufficient to deal with this problem. As Congress recognized when it passed the Clean Air Act nearly 30 years ago, Federal legislation is the only effective way to deal with airborne pollutants that know no State boundaries.

That is why I am introducing legislation to reduce the amount of mercury emitted from the largest polluters. This bill sets mercury emissions standards for coal-fired utilities, waste combustors, commercial and industrial

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

boilers, chlor-alkali plants and Portland cement plants. According to EPA's report to Congress, these sources are responsible for more than 87 percent of all mercury emissions in the U.S.

My bill also phases out the use of mercury in products and ensures that municipalities work with waste incinerators to keep products that contain mercury out of the waste stream. It would also require a recycling program for products that contain mercury as an essential component, and increases research into the effects of mercury pollution.

With mercury levels in the environment growing every year, it is long past time to enact a comprehensive strategy for controlling mercury pollution. We have the technology for companies to meet these standards, and this bill will allow them to choose the best approach for their facility. We have reduced or eliminated other toxins, without the catastrophic effects that some industries predicted. Now we should eliminate dangerous levels of mercury. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and stop mercury from polluting our waters, infecting our fish and wildlife, and threatening the health of our children.

DISAPPROVING EXTENSION OF
NONDISCRIMINATORY TREAT-
MENT TO PRODUCTS OF PEOPLES
REPUBLIC OF CHINA

SPEECH OF

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of extending Normal Trade Relations to China for the coming year and against House Joint Resolution 57. Extending Normal Trade Relations will maintain our healthy economic ties with China, the world's fourth largest economy, and allow us to move closer to agreement on a stable and acceptable plan for China's international economic engagement.

China today is America's fourth largest trading partner. In 1998 Americans exported \$14 billion worth of goods to China, making China the 13th largest market abroad for U.S. goods, such as aircraft and aircraft parts, fertilizer, and electronic equipment.

My district exports plastic materials and resins, automotive parts, telecommunications equipment, building materials, food and dairy products, agricultural machinery, and pollution control equipment to China. Continued engagement with China enhances future economic opportunities for U.S. workers and businesses. Dan Bunch Enterprises, a company in Kansas City that exports cleaning products to China, has shared with me that they have seen significant increases in available jobs for their company this year as a direct result of trade relations with China, and they expect this trend to continue in the coming years.

Another company in my district that depends on extensive and successful participation in the Chinese market is AlliedSignal. China is one of the top 3 global markets where AlliedSignal is focusing its efforts to

grow. AlliedSignal presently has 1,000 employees in China and 60,000 U.S. employees. Among the major products they export to China are commercial aircraft equipment (e.g., engines, auxiliary power units, landing systems, avionics), turbochargers, electrical power distribution transformer cores, fabrics, fibers, and friction materials. AlliedSignal has taken a proactive stance regarding the issue of security, especially cyber security, even going so far as to hire an outside firm to attempt to penetrate their firewalls.

AlliedSignal's interests in China also promote capitalistic and democratic ideals in China. They provide their Chinese associates with comprehensive training in economics fundamentals, as well as major supervisory and managerial fundamental skills training. This training teaches things like delegation of authority, team participation, high performance work team practices, priority setting, respect for individuals, and due process under the work rule and plant adjudication processes. They also provide funding for their associates to attend China-Europe International Business School to receive a western style MBA.

Approximately 400,000 American jobs depend on exports to China and Hong Kong, and exports to these countries have more than tripled over the past decade. In 1998, Missouri exported \$137 billion worth of goods to China. The most recent statistics from the International Trade Administration indicate that Greater Kansas City's merchandise export sales to China total \$61 million per year, a 151% increase since 1993.

I applaud the extension of Normal Trade Relations with China, which has helped to lift 200 million Chinese out of poverty since 1978. Mr. Speaker, let us continue our efforts toward engaging China in negotiations to reform human rights, worker rights, and international security.

THE SOUTH PACIFIC GAMES

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, August 2, 1999

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, one of the largest regional multi-sporting events in the Pacific, the South Pacific Games, was recently hosted by the island of Guam. The 11th South Pacific Games consisted of roughly 6,000 athletes and officials. Athletes from 22 countries competed in 26 sporting events over a 15 day period in May and June.

Once again, athletes from the North and South Pacific gathered and engaged in various sporting events—a celebration of goodwill, cultural exchange, brotherhood and healthy competition. This year's competitors represented the geographic locations of Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia.

The island of Guam was responsible for all aspects of the organization of the 11th South Pacific Games. Every effort was made to make this year's Games the most memorable in the history. Organizers developed and implemented a Master Plan that guided the Games to a successful conclusion. The 1999 Guam South Pacific Games Commission consisted of the chairman, executive chairman,

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