

Senators Basham, Jacobs, Anderson, Birkholz, Olshove, Clark-Coleman, Brater, Scott, Cherry, Barcia and Gleason offered the following resolution:

**Senate Resolution No. 31.**

A resolution to urge Congress and the President of the United States to take certain actions with regard to the sale, export, and storage of mercury and mercury compounds.

Whereas, Highly toxic mercury and mercury compounds in the environment pose a threat to present and future generations. As many as 10 percent of women of childbearing age in the United States carry mercury in their blood at levels that could put a baby at risk. As many as 630,000 children born annually in the United States are at risk of neurological problems related to mercury; and

Whereas, The most significant source of mercury exposure in the United States is the ingestion of contaminated fish. The Environmental Protection Agency reports that as of 2004, 44 states have fish advisories covering more than 13,000,000 lake acres and more than 75,000 river miles. Statewide advisories have been posted for freshwaters in 21 states and coastal waters in 12 states. Since fish are an essential and critical component of a nutritious diet worldwide, the long-term solution to minimize the risk of mercury exposure is not to reduce fish consumption, but rather to minimize global mercury use and releases, thereby reducing mercury levels in the environment; and

Whereas, Mercury pollution does not respect political boundaries, as emissions from a source are deposited locally, regionally, and globally. The Great Lakes are impacted by local, regional, and global emissions that travel thousands of miles before depositing in the world's largest freshwater resource; and

Whereas, The free trade of mercury and mercury compounds on the world market, at relatively low prices and in ready supply, encourages the continued use of mercury outside of the United States, often involving highly dispersive activities such as small-scale gold mining in developing countries. Although the intentional use of mercury is declining in the United States as a consequence of process changes in the manufacturing of products (including batteries, paints, switches, and measuring devices), those uses remain substantial in the developing world, where releases from the products are extremely likely due to the limited pollution control and waste management infrastructures in those countries; and

Whereas, The European Union is in the process of enacting legislation that will prohibit mercury exports by no later than 2011. As a net exporter of mercury and mercury compounds, the United States can significantly affect the free trade of mercury and mercury compounds through a ban on exports that could facilitate the switch to affordable mercury alternatives in the developing world. The Environmental Council of the States has adopted a resolution requesting the President of the United States to direct federal agencies involved in the long-term management of mercury to recommend a plan for long-term storage; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge Congress to prohibit the sale, distribution, or transfer of mercury between governmental agencies and prohibit the export of mercury and mercury compounds, and urge the President to establish storage capacity for mercury and mercury compounds in excess of quantities necessary for domestic consumption; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.