

103D CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 287

To express the sense of the Senate regarding regulation of mercury hazardous waste, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 30 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 12), 1994

Mr. WELLSTONE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. JEFFORDS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

RESOLUTION

To express the sense of the Senate regarding regulation of mercury hazardous waste, and for other purposes.

Whereas there has been a 2- to 3-fold global increase in mercury in the environment since the 1850's, increases of 3.4 times have been found in wilderness areas of the United States, and much higher increases have been found in developed areas of the United States;

Whereas mercury is truly a national and international concern because mercury is atmospherically transported indiscriminately across political boundaries;

Whereas mercury poses a serious and growing public health and environmental problem even when released in minute quantities;

Whereas mercury presents particular problems in aquatic systems where mercury bioaccumulates;

Whereas human consumption advisories have been issued in at least 34 States because of the high levels of mercury contamination in fish, resulting in losses to the tourism and fishing industries and related activities;

Whereas atmospheric deposition resulting from human activities, including waste disposal, contributes most of the mercury loading to the environment;

Whereas numerous studies have indicated that mercury-containing lamps will soon become the largest contributor of mercury to municipal waste streams in the United States;

Whereas the United States, through the Environmental Protection Agency, is working cooperatively within the international community to reduce global risks of mercury in the environment;

Whereas the Environmental Protection Agency is already actively supporting efforts to virtually eliminate releases of mercury in the Great Lakes Region; and

Whereas the waste management priorities of the United States encourage recycling before waste disposal: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that the
- 2 Environmental Protection Agency should not exempt mer-
- 3 cury hazardous wastes from hazardous waste regulation
- 4 but instead should adopt waste management policies and
- 5 rules that seek to minimize all releases of mercury into
- 6 the environment while encouraging the recycling of mer-

1 cury-containing fluorescent lamps and other mercury-con-
2 taining devices.

