

**Speech on the House Floor Concerning  
Thimerosal and Mercury in Childhood Vaccinations  
February 9, 2005  
Congressman Dan Burton (IN-5)**

Thank you, Mr. speaker.

Mr. speaker, over the past four or five years I have -- as chairman of the Government Reform Committee and chairman of the Subcommittee on Health and Human Rights I held a number of hearings regarding mercury in vaccines and what kind of impact it had on children. When we first started having the hearings we were concerned that there was a epidemic of autism and other neurological disorders in children and we found from scientists who testified before the committee over the years that there was no doubt that one of the major contributing factors to neurological problems, including autism among children, was the mercury in vaccines under the title of Thimerosal. Thimerosal is a preservative which contains 50% Ethel mercury. And as children got more and more vaccinations, as many as thirty now before they start in the first grade, the incidents of neurological disorders, autism, and other childhood mental problems grew dramatically. It used to be one in 10,000 children were autistic according to the Center for Disease Control. Now it's one in 150. We have an absolute epidemic of autism. Now the pharmaceutical companies for years have said that there is no correlation between the mercury in vaccines and the autism and other neurological childhood disorders and things like Alzheimer's in adults. But this past week on the front page, the front page of the "Los Angeles Times" there was a very, very long article. And I want to read to you, Mr. speaker, some of the things that were in that article.

The title of the article was "91memo warned of mercury in vaccines and shots." The march 1991 memo obtained by he Times showed that nearly a decade before our federal health agency first publicly exposed the potential dangers of mercury vaccines, senior executives from Merck & Company, a major pharmaceutical company, were already aware that infants were getting an elevated dose of mercury in vaccinations containing the widely used preservative Thimerosal, a preservative containing nearly 50% mercury by weight. In fact, the memo clearly states, quote, "If eight doses of Thimerosal containing vaccine were given in the first six months of life, the mercury given, say to an average sized infant of 12 pounds, would be 87 times the daily allowance of mercury for a baby of that size." 87 times! The memo further states, it is reasonable to conclude that Thimerosal should be removed from single dose vials, when it can be removed, especially where use in infants and young children is anticipated.

At the time this memo was written the U.S. health authorities were recommending an aggressive expansion of the immunizations schedule for children in the first six months of life, adding five new shots to the schedule and many of these shots, as well as those already included in the vaccine immunization schedule, contain mercury and Thimerosal. What did the pharmaceutical company do after learning this? They did nothing. Absolutely nothing! It took eight years before they started removing Thimerosal from any of the children's vaccines.

It is criminal in my opinion that this sort of thing takes place. Mercury in any vaccination, whether it's a child's vaccination or an adult's vaccination, should be removed. Mercury is one of the most toxic substances on earth. It's toxic to the neurological system of adults and especially infants. And yet children have been getting 30 vaccinations, as many as 30, before they start in the first grade of school, and we have an absolute epidemic of neurological problems including autism.

Mr. speaker, I want to submit this article for the record. I'm going to send a Dear Colleague around to all my colleagues, and I hope everybody, and my good friend the gentlelady from California who has been working with me on this for a long time, I hope that everybody will pay attention and talk to their pharmaceutical representatives and get mercury out of all vaccinations but especially every childhood vaccination. The future of America depends on that because these children are going to grow up. They are going to become dependent upon the taxpayer and it's going to cost all of us trillions of dollars if we don't deal with the problem now.

Thank you, Mr. speaker. I yield back the balance of my time.