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ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

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November 2, 2007

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Mr. Michael Bender  
Mercury Policy Project  
1420 North Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear Mr. Bender:

The Domestic Policy Subcommittee, Oversight and Government Reform Committee, hereby requests your testimony at a hearing on November 14, 2007, 2:00 P.M. in Room 2154 Rayburn House Office Building.

The hearing concerns the environmental risks due to the release of dental mercury amalgam. As you know, mercury is a persistent, bioaccumulative toxin. The Environmental Protection Agency has estimated that dentists account for 14% of annual consumption of mercury, and that dental mercury amalgam comprises over half of all mercury currently in use in the United States today. As EPA indicated in its Roadmap for Mercury, "about 36% of mercury entering publicly owned treatment works is discharged from dental offices due to mercury in waste dental amalgam. Mercury discharges from dental offices far exceeded all other commercial and residential sources."

We ask that you testify on the significance of dental mercury amalgam as a precursor to methyl-mercury releases into the environment across the United States. Specifically, we ask that you discuss exposure via the following pathways: 1) incineration of municipal sewage sludge, 2) cremation, 3) all emissions from dental offices (including air releases, accidental spills, contaminated plumbing fixtures and buildings, wastewater discharges and disposal into municipal solid waste and hazardous waste facilities), and 4) direct emission from sludge application to land and as a soil amendment. We also ask that you discuss how dental mercury amalgam may be a factor in EPA's finding that "most [publicly owned treatment works] POTWs will not meet [the mercury] criterion [adopted by Great Lakes states]" and what the consequences may be for mercury contamination of the Great Lakes and the development of total maximum daily loads (TMDL) for the Great Lakes and other bodies of water throughout the United States.

Mr. Michael Bender  
November 2, 2007  
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The Domestic Policy Subcommittee has broad jurisdiction over many federal agencies, including the Department of Labor. The Oversight and Government Reform Committee is the principal oversight committee in the House of Representatives, with broad investigative jurisdiction as set forth in House Rule X. Information for witnesses appearing before the Subcommittee is contained in the enclosed Witness Information Sheet.

If you have any questions, please contact Jaron Bourke, Staff Director at (202) 225-6427.

Sincerely,



Dennis J. Kucinich  
Chairman  
Domestic Policy Subcommittee

cc: Darrell Issa  
Ranking Minority Memner

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## Witness Information Sheet

*The following is a summary of some of the pertinent rules and procedures applicable to witnesses testifying before the Domestic Subcommittee Policy of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform:*

- *Witnesses should bring 100 copies of their written testimony to the hearing or to Room 349B Rayburn HOB, Washington, D. C. 20515. Testimony should be received no later than two business days before the hearing, witnesses should also provide their statement in electronic format, by emailing it to Jean Gosa, Clerk, at [jean.gosa@mail.house.gov](mailto:jean.gosa@mail.house.gov).*
- *At the hearing, each witness will be asked to summarize his or her written testimony in five minutes in order to maximize the time available for discussion and questions. Each witness's full written testimony will be included the official hearing record.*
- *House Rule XI clause 2(g)(4) requires that witnesses appearing in a nongovernmental capacity submit to the Subcommittee in advance of the hearing "a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source (by agency and program) of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) received during the current fiscal year or either of the two previous fiscal years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness."*
- *The Oversight Committee does not provide financial reimbursement for witness travel or accommodations. Witnesses with extenuating circumstances, however, may submit a written request for such reimbursements to Robin Butler, Financial Administrator, 2157 Rayburn House Office Building, at least one week prior to the hearing. Reimbursements will not be made without prior approval.*
- *Witnesses with disabilities should contact the Subcommittee to arrange any necessary accommodations.*
- *Procedural rules governing this hearing are online at [www.oversight.house.gov/com.asp](http://www.oversight.house.gov/com.asp)*
- *The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. The jurisdiction of the Committee is set forth in House Rule X clauses 1(m), 2, 3(i), and 4(c).*

*Please direct inquiries regarding these rules and procedures to the Domestic Policy Subcommittee, at (202) 225-6427.*