

SENATOR COLLINS CALLS FOR NEW MERCURY LEGISLATION

Collins says new studies prove EPA mercury rule insufficient

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Washington, DC -

Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) today praised the importance of two new mercury studies and announced legislation to create a nationwide mercury monitoring network and reduce mercury emissions.

The new studies, by David Evers and Wing Goodale of the Biodiversity Research Institute in Gorham, Maine, and others, are being released today in the January issue of *BioScience Magazine*. The studies demonstrate the existence of mercury hotspots in the northeastern United States and attribute much of the cause of the hotspots to power plant emissions.

The studies conflict markedly with EPA's mercury modeling data, which was not peer-reviewed, and which was used to justify the EPA Clean Air Mercury Rule. For example, the studies showed that mercury deposition is five times higher than previously estimated by EPA near a coal plant in the vicinity of a biological mercury hotspot spanning southern New Hampshire and northeastern Massachusetts. The studies demonstrate major flaws in the EPA Mercury Rule, and also demonstrate the need for real mercury measurements, instead of the computer model used by EPA.

Senator Collins announced that she will introduce legislation to create a nationwide mercury monitoring network. In addition, the Senator announced that she will reintroduce legislation to reduce mercury emissions from power plants by 90%.

"I have long-argued that EPA used faulty science in order to justify an insufficient mercury rule, and these studies prove it," said Senator Collins. "EPA misrepresented the mercury problem based on computer data which had not been peer-reviewed, and then put out a rule which does not account for mercury hotspots and which places children and pregnant women at risk.

"With these studies, David Evers has shown the importance of real, on-the-ground mercury measurements, instead of relying solely on the computer model used by EPA to justify its misguided rule. I am introducing legislation to reduce mercury emissions by 90% and to create a nationwide mercury monitoring network. Congress should act on this issue expeditiously."

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