

October 6, 2008

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

On behalf of the Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA) I respectfully urge you to sign the Mercury Export Ban of 2008. This legislation, which had bi-partisan sponsorship and support, passed overwhelmingly in both houses of Congress.

William F. Cass
Executive Director

Terri L. Goldberg
Deputy Director

As an Association of the solid and hazardous waste program directors in the state environmental agencies of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont, NEWMOA assists in the implementation of state laws designed to reduce anthropogenic sources of mercury in the environment. It is well known that mercury is a powerful neurotoxin that accumulates in the food chain and can cause damage to the brain and nervous system. All of the NEWMOA states have health advisories concerning the consumption of fish because certain vulnerable populations, such as pregnant women, fetuses and children are at risk from such exposure.

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States in the Northeast have enacted major legislation to address mercury use in products and ultimately in solid and hazardous waste. This legislation requires bans and phase-outs on the sale of certain products, product labeling, and/or reporting by manufacturers on their use of mercury in products that are sold in the region. In addition to these requirements, state environmental agencies have initiated mandatory and voluntary programs for collecting many mercury-containing products at their end-of-life.

The Mercury Export Ban of 2008 will help ensure that mercury that has been captured in the United States via end-of-life collection efforts, recycling, and other means will not be exported to other countries where it can re-enter the environment. Emissions of mercury in other countries, in addition to posing a danger to the population in those areas, could result in a threat to public health in the United States as well. Because mercury is volatile, if it enters the atmosphere in other parts of the world, a portion of it will be deposited here in our country.

We ask that you help our nation to reduce this threat to public health by signing the Mercury Export Ban of 2008 as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Garry Gulka
NEWMOA Chair

Cc: ECOS, NEGC; NEWMOA Directors