



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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Mercury-in-Vaccines Symposium Yields Surprising Results

All panelists agree that Thimerosal is toxic

JEFFERSON CITY – Sen. John Loudon, R-Chesterfield, on Wednesday co-hosted a symposium on the dangers of Thimerosal in vaccines. Six respected panelists shared their research and engaged in a sometimes heated exchange over the safety of the mercury-based preservative.

“I was very pleased that there was consensus that mercury is toxic and its use should be phased out,” Loudon said. “The disagreement really centered on whether that toxicity could be linked to actual harm to humans. One side of the debate insisted the dangers of mercury are clear; the other is holding out for more definitive proof. However, both sides agree they do not want the debate to lead people to shun vaccines.”

Loudon held the panel discussion, entitled “Mercury in Medicine: Separating Science from Fiction,” in conjunction with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. Experts came from across the country to attend the event and address the effects of mercury in vaccines.

“The main conclusion was that mercury is no longer present in state-mandated childhood vaccines, but it remains in most flu vaccines,” Loudon said. “Members of the panel agree that a commission should be assembled to develop ways to encourage the pharmaceutical industry to deliver flu and varicella vaccines without mercury.”

Thimerosal is a preservative used in vaccines to prevent contamination in the more economical multiple-dose containers. However, many charged that this puts profits for vaccine producers over public health. Legislation approved in 2005 bans all but trace amounts of mercury in vaccines given to pregnant women and children under age 3.

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