

many, many things in there that the American people would not approve of. And I fear that in the omnibus bill we're going to see a lot of those kinds of things.

Now, we don't know yet what's going to be in the omnibus bill, but in addition to a tremendous number of earmarks, we are probably going to see sanctions against Cuba weakened. We are probably going to see the Mexico City policy overturned. The House and Senate versions of the State Department appropriations bill permits grants and subsidies for organizations that perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning, overturning the Bush administration's Mexico City policy. We don't need to be doing that. The American people do not want us to take their hard-earned money to fund abortions.

It is probably going to provide federally funded benefits for domestic partners. Before being stripped from the House-passed Financial Services general government appropriations bill, a provision would have allowed unmarried cohabiting couples in the District of Columbia to qualify for Federal benefits on the same basis as legally married couples. That provision could be brought back to life in the majority's omnibus legislation.

Ending an IRS private debt collection program, the majority spending bill could limit funding to implement the Internal Revenue Service's use of private collection firms to collect unpaid taxes. The private debt collection initiative is expected to collect \$1.3 billion in taxes owed to the government that would otherwise go uncollected.

Undermining regulatory reform, a provision in the House-passed Financial Services general government appropriations bill, again, H.R. 2829, would kill efforts to increase the quality, accountability, and transparency of the Federal Government's regulatory review process. It would result in a fox guarding the hen house approach to approving Federal rules and regulations.

We don't need an omnibus bill. We need to vote on these bills one at a time, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. LARSON of Connecticut addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BLOOD LEVELS OF MERCURY ARE RELATED TO DIAGNOSIS OF AUTISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, it's late at night here in the

Capitol, and most of my colleagues are in their offices or have gone home. But I want to talk about an issue that's very, very important that we've been talking about now for the last 8 years.

I was chairman of the Government Reform Committee for 6 years, and during that time, my grandson became autistic; and we checked to find out what was the cause, trying to find out, because my daughter and her husband were just extremely upset about it, as we were as grandparents. And we found that he had received nine shots in one day, seven of which had a product called thimerosal, a preservative, in it. And the thimerosal was 50 percent ethylmercury. And so I decided to have hearings to try to find out if the ethylmercury in those vaccines had anything to do with the autistic problem my grandson had. And we found, by having many, many hearings over a 4-year period, we found that scientists from all over the world and leading doctors and educators here that work with autistic children, that the mercury in the vaccines did contribute to the autistic epidemic that we had.

We used to have one in 10,000 children that were diagnosed as being autistic. One in 10,000. Today the Centers for Disease Control will tell you it's one out of 150. It's an absolute epidemic in this country. And we have been fighting and fighting and fighting to make sure that those families who have been damaged and those children who have been damaged by autism get some kind of compensation. And that's why, and I think in 1986 we passed what was called the Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund, and it took some of the money from the pharmaceutical companies when they sold their vaccine products to put into this fund to take care of people who are damaged by vaccines. And one of the reasons we did that was because of the issue of autism, although at that time I didn't know much about it.

In any event, the Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund has about \$3 billion in it, and the people who's children have been adversely affected by mercury and have autism have not been able to get anything out of that. They have to go through a process and see a special master, and he has to judge whether or not the information that he has and the information they have lead them to believe that the mercury in the vaccines caused autism. And so far the special masters have not been able to ascertain, according to them, that the mercury in the vaccines does cause autism.

Well, last week, 2 years ago, let's see, 4 years ago there was a report, 2004, that said that there was definitely no connection between the mercury and the vaccinations and the children getting autism. Well, this past November, just last month, two doctors, Dr. Catherine DeSoto and Dr. Robert T. Hitlan, both very renowned doctors across this country, they have Ph.D.s in medicine, they wrote an article in the Journal of

Child Neurology. And you can't discount this. What they're saying is fact. I want to read to you the summary of what they said. They said: "The question of what is leading to the apparent increase in autism is of great importance. Like the link between aspirin and heart attack, even a small effect can have a major health implication. If there is any link between autism and mercury, it is absolutely crucial that the first reports of the question are not falsely stated and that no link occurs."

Now, get this: "We have reanalyzed the data set forth originally reported in 2004 and have found that the original P value was in error and that a significant relation does exist between the blood levels of mercury and diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder. Moreover, the hair sample analysis results offer some support for the idea that persons with autism may be less efficient and more variable at eliminating mercury from the blood."

The fact of the matter is the mercury in the vaccines has autism. It's not the only cause of autism. But now we have scientific evidence by two leading doctors in the Journal of Child Neurology that says without doubt, the mercury in the vaccines does cause autism, is a major contributing factor.

Well, I've written, contacted Congressman KUCINICH, who's chairman of the subcommittee that deals with this in the Capitol, and I've also contacted the special masters that decide these cases and have urged them to re-evaluate all of these cases where people who have autistic children have found that the mercury in the vaccines may have been a major cause.

Now we know that it is a cause of autism, and those people who have suffered, and those kids who have suffered need to be compensated out of the Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund.

So I'd like to say to my colleagues, I hope you will join me in making sure that the information I just read gets out to everybody. These kids are going to live to be 50, 60, 70 years old, and unless there's some help for them, they're going to be a real burden on the taxpayers and on society. We have an obligation to make sure they're taken care of.

I hope all of my colleagues will read this statement tonight and help us to change the attitude of our health agencies and the special masters dealing with this problem.

In November 2007, the well-respected scientific journal, the Journal of Child Neurology, published an article authored by Drs. M. Catherine DeSoto and Robert T. Hitlan (PhDs), detailing their findings on the relationship between mercury and autism spectrum disorders. The article was entitled "Blood Levels of Mercury are Related to Diagnosis of Autism: A Reanalysis of an Important Data Set."

To summarize the article, Drs. DeSoto and Hitlan reanalyzed a data set the subject of a 2004 study that found no relationship between mercury and autism. By reexamining the data set, Drs. DeSoto and Hitlan determined that the conclusions of the 2004 study were wrong,