

Dannemeyer challenges 'ozone hole' hoax

by Marsha Freeman

On Aug. 6, Rep. William Dannemeyer (R-Calif.) announced at a Washington press conference that he will be introducing a resolution into the U.S. Congress to stop the "rush to judgment" over supposedly declining levels of stratospheric ozone. The resolution calls for the convening of a presidential commission, composed of scientists on both sides of the issue, to discern whether there is any thinning of the stratospheric ozone layer, outside of normal seasonal and climatic variations; whether the use of man-made chemicals has an appreciable effect on ozone depletion, if it does indeed occur; and whether there has been a dangerous increase in ultraviolet (UV) radiation as a result of this posited ozone depletion, as is claimed.

Joining Dannemeyer at the press conference were Dr. Hugh Ellsaesser and Dr. S. Fred Singer, who have been prominent among those scientists raising serious questions about the scientific validity of the ozone depletion theory. A list of 22 scientists from around the world, including former Atomic Energy Commission head and governor of Washington state Dr. Dixy Lee Ray, in support of the resolution, was released to the press.

Joining Dannemeyer as original sponsors on the resolution are Reps. Richard Arney (R-Tex.), Jack Fields (R-Tex.), Bob Stump (R-Ariz.), and Clyde Holloway (R-La.).

Bush made error in judgment

"Extremists have been so exercised over 'ozone depletion,'" Dannemeyer stated, that "they were able to get the Senate (led by Al Gore) to sustain a treaty to ban chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by the year 2000," which was based on "very bad science, and bad politics."

Not at all shy about criticizing his fellow Republicans, Dannemeyer charged that "President Bush unilaterally moved the date up to 1995," which was an "error in judgment, as well." Neither the politicians nor the people promoting ozone hole stories have informed the public of the consequences, Dannemeyer stressed.

Banning CFCs on the basis of faulty science and unproven computer models would involve a "cost in human suffering [which] will be profound," Dannemeyer stated. This includes the threat to the health and survival of 20-40 million people in developing nations, because the ability to refrigerate food, medicines, vaccines, blood, and other life-saving

materials could be interrupted as nations lose their major source of freon and other CFCs, which is the United States.

The CFCs ban will have dramatic consequences in the United States as well, Dannemeyer warned. "This law means that your refrigerator and air conditioner will be illegal by 1995," he stated. The cost to the American consumer for new refrigerators, home and automobile air conditioners, freezer units, and other necessary CFCs-dependent equipment could reach \$1 trillion.

Scare stories

For the past six months there has been an endless stream of scare stories about the possibility of increased cases of skin cancer from a supposedly gaping hole in the ozone layer, which, we are told, will let in dangerous levels of ultraviolet radiation.

Ellsaesser, retired from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, pointed out that even if the worst scenario of ozone depletion were true, the effect in terms of increased radiation would be the equivalent of moving 100 miles closer to the equator. For people living in Washington, for example, this would mean moving to Richmond, Virginia. Ellsaesser recommended that people read the recently released book *The Holes in the Ozone Scare*, published by 21st Century Science & Associates in Washington, D.C., to get the facts on the ozone "hole" and to debunk the scare stories on health effects (see *EIR*, Aug. 14).

Singer, head of the Environmental Policy Project, stated categorically that the supposed "health effects are mostly hype and hoax perpetrated on the public. I don't understand why newspapers print them."

A leaflet attacking the resolution was distributed at the press conference by the Alliance for Responsible CFC Policy, which includes companies such as refrigerator manufacturers, who will certainly see an increase in sales when each of us has to replace our household appliances, and CFCs producers, such as Du Pont Corp., which will reap huge benefits when people are forced to buy its enormously expensive CFC "substitutes." The Alliance claimed in its leaflet that the "suggestion that the issue is a 'hoax,' supported by a handful of scientists . . . is absurd."

Singer stressed, however, that the "scientific disagreements are quite serious," and that it was past time to have an unbiased assessment of the science involved in questions of ozone depletion.

Once introduced, the resolution is expected to be referred to the House Energy and Commerce Committee. There, it is likely that Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), the chairman of the Health and Environment Subcommittee who is a supporter of numerous environmental hoaxes, will try to bottle it up to ensure that it never leaves the committee. Therefore, an outpouring of widespread public support for the resolution is needed in order to force an open and honest debate of the issues.