

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4934

To require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a study on mercury vapor released from synthetic flooring made using phenylmercuric acetate, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 1, 2020

Mr. BOOKER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a study on mercury vapor released from synthetic flooring made using phenylmercuric acetate, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Mercury Vapor Study
5 Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

1 (1) PMA flooring, a type of rubberized poly-
2 urethane flooring, was widely installed in schools,
3 hospitals, retirement homes, community centers, and
4 other public spaces starting in the 1960s;

5 (2) PMA flooring may release mercury vapor
6 into the air as the flooring deteriorates;

7 (3) mercury is a persistent bioaccumulative
8 neurotoxin with great potential for harm, particu-
9 larly for children and other vulnerable populations;

10 (4) there have been no studies examining the
11 effects on children and other vulnerable populations
12 from mercury vapor emitted from PMA flooring;

13 (5) several States have issued guidance on max-
14 imum acceptable levels of mercury vapor from PMA
15 flooring, but the guidance levels vary from State to
16 State and there is currently no national standard;

17 (6) school districts and other public spaces
18 across the United States are unaware of the risk of
19 mercury vapor exposure from PMA flooring; and

20 (7) as of November 2020, it is not known—

21 (A) how many schools and public spaces
22 have PMA flooring installed;

23 (B) which schools and public spaces may
24 have PMA flooring installed; and

1 (C) whether PMA flooring is still being in-
2 stalled in school districts and public spaces
3 across the United States.

4 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act:

6 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
7 trator” means the Administrator of the Environ-
8 mental Protection Agency.

9 (2) PMA FLOORING.—The term “PMA floor-
10 ing” means synthetic flooring made using
11 phenylmercuric acetate as a catalyst.

12 **SEC. 4. STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF MERCURY VAPOR**
13 **FROM PMA FLOORING ON HUMAN HEALTH.**

14 (a) STUDY.—The Administrator, in consultation with
15 the Administrator of the Agency for Toxic Substances and
16 Disease Registry, the Consumer Product Safety Commis-
17 sion, and the heads of other appropriate Federal agencies,
18 shall conduct a study—

19 (1) on the potential exposure to mercury vapor
20 from PMA flooring, including by collecting existing
21 data and obtaining new data on mercury vapor con-
22 centrations in facilities with PMA flooring;

23 (2) on the prevalence of PMA flooring in
24 schools; and

1 (3) to establish appropriate industrial hygiene
2 monitoring steps to prevent or interdict mercury
3 vapor exposure.

4 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 540 days after the date
5 of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit
6 to Congress and make publicly available on the website
7 of the Environmental Protection Agency a report that in-
8 cludes—

9 (1) a description of the results of the study con-
10 ducted under subsection (a);

11 (2) a calculation of the minimal risk level for
12 exposure to mercury vapor from PMA flooring;

13 (3) a registry of schools with PMA flooring;

14 (4) guidance on best practices to properly ad-
15 dress and mitigate the risk of mercury vapor expo-
16 sure from PMA flooring;

17 (5) a plan to communicate the potential haz-
18 ards of PMA flooring to school districts and the gen-
19 eral public; and

20 (6) a recommendation as to whether to ban,
21 phase out, or otherwise restrict the future installa-
22 tion of PMA flooring.

○