

As to the pure enjoyment of discovering another language, to that as well, I can attest. It is fun and exciting to realize that you could communicate with someone across the globe, or even just across the room. In our modern times, expression is power and with the knowledge of another language, one has twice as much of that power.

Thank you for your time. **P***Mr. er, these are the words of the future of America. School children are able to recognize the value of knowledge and realize the power of having an advantage in the real world. Foreign languages open up a world of opportunities, and these children recognize that. I thank the Speaker for allowing me to share the experiences of the youth of America and the value of education.

PATIENT ACCESS TO METERED DOSE INHALERS MUST BE PRESERVED

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 1997

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today the House Subcommittee on Health and Environment conducted an important hearing on the issues surrounding the Montreal Protocol of 1987, which bans the use of ozone depleting substances.

As many of my colleagues know, the Food and Drug Administration [FDA] recently unveiled a proposal to eliminate essential-use exemptions for metered dose inhalers [MDI's]. Mr. CLIFF STEARNS, my good friend from Florida, and I have introduced legislation [H.R. 2221] aimed at helping those suffering from respiratory conditions, particularly children with asthma and cystic fibrosis [CF], preserve their access to medicines they rely upon to breathe—metered dose inhalers.

H.R. 2221 requires the FDA and the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] to delay their plans to remove chlorofluorocarbon-based MDI's from the marketplace before 2005. If Congress allows the FDA's ill-advised plan banning CFC MDI's to take effect, the 30 million Americans suffering from respiratory diseases could be placed at risk.

When the symptoms of these diseases strike, patients reach for the safe, effective, and proven medication delivery systems that have kept them alive for years—metered dose inhalers. Quite literally, metered dose inhalers are a matter of life and breath.

Currently, all metered dose inhalers, save one, are powered by chlorofluorocarbon [CFC] propellants. Under the 1987 Montreal Protocol, as amended, CFC's are to be phased-out globally because of the possible negative impact on the ozone layer. It is important to point out, however, that the signatories to the Montreal Protocol explicitly recognized that certain uses of CFC's generate tremendous health and safety benefits. Consequently, MDI's were given a temporary essential-use exemption from the treaty.

Despite this global exemption, the U.S. FDA has unilaterally decided to accelerate the phase-out of CFC-containing metered dose inhalers. Under the FDA's proposed framework, CFC-containing inhalers—used safely and regularly by millions of asthmatic children, adults, and senior citizens—would be banned and consumers would be forced to purchase alter-

native products, even if there was but a single alternative on the market.

Indeed, as of today, only one company has received FDA approval to manufacture non-CFC MDI's. Although pharmaceutical companies are currently developing CFC-free MDI's, the FDA proposal will force patients to abandon their existing medications and create a de facto monopoly in the substantial MDI market. Respiratory patients will lose the benefits of free-market competition, and the less well-off will be unfairly burdened with higher prices.

While adults may not notice the different taste, smell, or sensation of a CFC-free inhaler, an 8 year-old child might be reluctant to use his or her new MDI because it tastes funny. I have four children, and both of my daughters, Melissa and Elyse, have asthma. Like everybody else, people have different tastes and preferences. Any parent with children knows that it can be difficult to get them to take a medication perceived to be unpleasant. That is why there are dozens of flavors of cough syrups and cold medicines in the pharmacy.

But there is a big difference between cough syrup and MDI's—the failure to properly use an MDI can kill you. Mr. Speaker, it is a well known fact that asthma is currently the number one reason for children's school absences, and that roughly 5,000 Americans die each year from asthma-related complications. Furthermore, for millions of asthma sufferers, the single most important part of successful treatment is maintaining a steady medication routine. Disrupting this routine, which is a certain byproduct of FDA's proposal, will needlessly put the lives and health of our children and senior citizens at risk. That is why the one-size-fits-all policy FDA is pursuing is counterproductive.

In addition, the amount of CFC's used in metered dose inhalers is so small—less than 0.025 kg per inhaler—that the marginal environmental improvement in the ozone layer that would result from the FDA plan would be virtually undetectable. Indeed, MDI's are responsible for less than 1 percent of the risk to the ozone layer as measured by atmospheric chlorine levels.

Equally perplexing about FDA's proposal is that asthma patients in the United States will have their dependable and effective medications taken away from them while consumers in China and Indonesia continue to use CFC's in hair spray and cosmetics until 2010.

There is no doubt that pharmaceutical companies should be encouraged to develop, test, and bring alternative products to market before 2005. However, it is terribly shortsighted to pull the plug on CFC-containing MDI's before there is a free market in tested, proven, and accepted alternative products.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there is an alternative approach for the FDA to follow: allow the existing products to be used until 2005, and encourage the development and use of alternative [CFC-free] metered dose inhalers so that asthma patients can gradually become accustomed to the different medications without undue disruptions and risks. Rather than forcing patients to suddenly switch medications and involuntarily, a more sensible approach would allow environmentally safe products to flourish and attain widespread acceptance.

I call upon my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to reject the FDA's cold-turkey pol-

icy—Australia has already rejected that strategy, and they have the highest rate of skin cancer anywhere in the world. If the Australians—who have the most to lose from the destruction of the ozone layer—find the FDA's model objectionable, surely the United States can achieve its goal of zeroing out CFC production in 2005 without the heavy-handed, one-size-fits-all approach that the FDA has proposed. The children and senior citizens who depend on metered dose inhalers to breathe and live normal lives deserve better.

GRAZING'S ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

HON. JOE SKEEN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 1997

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to discuss the benefits of grazing for our environment. I call particular attention to an excellent article published in yesterday's Washington Post, July 29, 1997, which was written by Tom Kenworthy.

I commend this article for readership by each of my colleagues in the House of Representatives because it points out, in a national media publication, the benefits to all Americans of the important practice of responsible grazing.

I ask unanimous consent to include Mr. Kenworthy's article in the RECORD.

[From the Washington Post, July 29, 1997]

SHEEP COME TO THE RESCUE IN THE WEST;
GRAZING HELPS RESTORE WEED-INFESTED LANDS

(By Tom Kenworthy)

BUFORD, COLO.—The hills sloping down toward Lake Avery in the Oak Ridge State Wildlife Area outside this northwest Colorado hamlet are lushly carpeted this summer with western wheat grass, Idaho fescue and other native grasses.

These hillsides, which provide critically needed winter range for elk and deer, were not always so healthy. Just a few years ago, they were awash in leafy spurge, a noxious weed that made its way to America from Europe and has no natural predators on this side of the Atlantic. Leafy spurge has now infested more than 3 million acres in the West—part of a broad invasion of western range land by nonnative weed species that is alarming land managers throughout the region and costing livestock producers tens of millions of dollars annually.

Isolated patches of spurge can still be found above Lake Avery. But by using sheep to intensively graze the infested portions of the 14,000-acre wildlife area in early summer, state officials have turned the tide against a stubborn, aggressive weed that sends roots 20 feet below the surface, can render pasture land nearly useless for cattle and horses and can devalue ranches to virtual worthlessness.

"We've contained it, and I believe we can eradicate it," said Bob Griffin, a wildlife property technician with the state agency that manages Oak Ridge.

The victory at the Oak Ridge Wildlife Area is being repeated elsewhere in the West as ranchers and land managers discover they can use sheep, and in some cases goats, to control spurge and some other noxious plant invaders. Unlike cattle, which become ill if

they ear spurge, sheep will, with a little encouragement, graze happily on it and thrive on its 20 percent protein content.

In a region where sheep are still reviled by cattlemen as despoilers of the public range and competitors for precious forage, there is considerable irony in the use of sheep to reclaim land for cattle.

"Some of these cow outfits wouldn't have sheep on them no matter what," observed sheep rancher John Paugh of Bozeman, Mont. "But there's a market because there is no other economically sound way to control spurge. When you get large acreages of it, there is no other way available."

Paugh, who runs about 2,200 lambs and ewes on spurge-infested range land near the Shields River in southwest Montana, said it is a good deal for him and for the cattle ranchers who rent him the land. He feeds his sheep for about half what it would cost to rent grass pasture, and his sheep are able to control the spurge for about one-third the \$25 an acre cost of using herbicides.

For sheep ranchers, an economically beleaguered fraternity whose ranks have declined by 17 percent since 1993 because of pressure from cheaper imports, the loss of federal wool subsidies and other factors, a difference of a few cents per acre of forage can be critical.

Although both wool and lamb prices have rebounded recently, the 1990s have been tough for America's sheep producers, according to Peter Orwick, executive director of the American Sheep Industry Association. Average wool prices, which hit \$1.40 per pound in the 1980s, went as low as 51 cents a pound three years ago, he said. And between 1991 and 1994, lamb meat sold for 50 cents a pound or less, compared with \$1.50 today.

"On the lamb side, the biggest factor we face is imports," Orwick said. "Imports have gone from 7 percent of consumption in 1993 to over 20 percent today."

Pat Sturgeon, 57, a second-generation sheep rancher who for the past half-dozen years has contracted with the state of Colorado to graze his 900 head on the Oak Ridge Wildlife Area from last May to early July, has his own sheep-ranching economics index.

"In 1970 I could buy a new pickup with 100 lambs," Sturgeon said as he showed off his flock to a visitor. "Now it takes 250 lambs. We don't drive new pickups anymore."

Being able to graze sheep relatively cheaply on state land for 45 days early in the season before federal grazing allotments open up "gives us an advantage," Sturgeon said. Under his contract with the state, he pays about \$2 a month per head for grazing the

wildlife area. That is several times higher than his cost later in the summer to graze on federal land, but it is still cheaper than what he would pay for private land.

"I need pasture in the spring," he said. "It lines me up to get on my national forest permit later."

Just how much of a dent sheep and goats can make in the leafy spurge problem is subject to considerable debate.

George Beck, a professor of weed science at Colorado State University who has been experimenting with sheep, both alone and in tandem with flea beetles on test plots outside Denver, said they are effective against spurge but not a silver bullet.

"It's not the answer, because spurge is such a troublesome plant," he said. "You'll never get perfect control, but they are a valuable part of it."

Don Smurthwaite, a Bureau of Land Management official in Boise, Idaho, is more enthusiastic. The federal agency this year imported 240 Angora goats from the Navajo Indian reservation in Arizona to help control spurge on 2,000 acres near Pocatello, and Smurthwaite said the experiment has "exceeded our wildest expectations."