

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

February 13, 2006 LB 872

coal-fired burning plants, we'd still have mercury in our environment.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: But it is known that an unacceptably high level of mercury is being emitted by plants in this country, without regard to what may be happening in Asia; isn't that true?

SENATOR SCHROCK: Yeah, it would depend on your perspective, but I think that's a reasonable statement, Senator Chambers. We need to bring the levels down.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And by requiring these plants to find a way to reduce the emissions, the overall amount of mercury in the environment in America, will be reduced; isn't that true?

SENATOR SCHROCK: That is correct.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay, so I'm not concerned about Asia; I'm concerned about what's happening right here, because big companies have a way of shifting the blame to somebody else so that the harm they're actually causing will be overlooked and not be addressed. Your bill deals with mercury, but I'm looking at all these trading programs, because it never seemed to be...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...a practice that was wholesome and beneficial to the public, in my opinion, and I believe it's something that the big companies, especially the ones who dirty up the environment, prevailed on Congress to implement. It would have been possible to simply set a level of emissions, above which no plant without penalty could go; isn't that true?

SENATOR SCHROCK: That is correct, Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: But as a boon to those big plants that are emitting large amounts of pollutants, this trading program was established. Isn't that where it came from?

SENATOR SCHROCK: That is correct.