

NEWS

from the office of

Congresswoman Diane E. Watson

33rd District - California

202-225-7084 / 202-225-2422 fax

Immediate Release
July 15, 2004

Contact: Bert Hammond
(202) 225-7084

Lois Hill Hale
(323) 965-1422

Representative Watson Salutes Kellogg's Decision to Halt Sale of Mercury Batteries – But Says an Immediate Ban Is Needed

Washington, D.C. – Congresswoman Diane E. Watson today welcomed the Kellogg Company's decision to discontinue promotions of toys that contain mercury batteries and to help consumers recycle batteries found in the toys by September 30, 2004.

“The Kellogg Company is moving in the right direction by agreeing to halt the promotion of its toys that contain mercury and to educate consumers on how to dispose of the toy properly,” remarked Congresswoman Watson. “However, I strongly recommend an immediate recall of these mercury toys. It is my understanding that approximately 17 million of the “Spidey-2 Signal” toys are involved in the cereal promotions. No matter how you look at it, that's a lot of mercury going into our environment and potentially being disposed of improperly. By the end of September most of the toys will probably have been sold.”

“The Kellogg Company should stop the sale of this product immediately, as it was forced to do in the states of Connecticut and New Hampshire. Last week, I asked California's State Attorney General, Bill Lockyer, to issue a determination on the legality of the sale of the Spidey 2-Signal toy in California. I also plan to introduce legislation next week that will instruct the Consumer Product Safety Commission to issue federal regulations banning the use of mercury in all children's toys.”

As part of the nationwide agreement, Kellogg has also agreed to provide consumers with a prepaid package to return promotional toys containing mercury, to properly recycle the toys returned by consumers, and to educate consumers about the need to dispose of mercury properly by posting information on its website and setting up a nationwide toll-free number (1-800-237-1132) that will explain the need for appropriate disposal.