Restrictions on the marketing of certain measuring devices containing mercury

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by María **SORNOSA MARTÍNEZ** (PES, ES) by 582 votes in favour to 17 against and 21 abstentions,and made some amendments to the Commission's proposal:

- immediate restrictive measures should cover all fever thermometers as well as other measuring devices intended for sale to the general public (e.g. manometers, barometers, sphygmomanometers, thermometers other than fever thermometers);

- they should cover other measuring devices not intended for sale to the general public after three years. However, a derogation may be granted for essential uses for a limited period of time, to be set on a case-by-case basis, if manufacturers can prove that they have undertaken every effort to develop safer alternatives or alternative processes, and that safer alternatives or alternative processes are still not available;

- restrictive measures will also apply to sphygmomanometers (excepting strain gauges in healthcare) containing mercury for both consumer and healthcare use;

- the restriction on measuring devices intended for sale to the general public will not apply to measuring devices that are more than 50 years old or to barometers.

Within two years, the Commission shall carry out a review of the availability of reliable safer alternatives that are technically and economically feasible, for mercury-containing sphygmomanometers and other measuring devices in healthcare and in other professional and industrial uses. On the basis of this review or as soon as new information on reliable safer alternatives for phygmomanometers and other measuring devices containing mercury becomes available, the Commission shall present a legislative proposal to extend the restrictions to sphygmomanometers and other measuring devices in healthcare, and other professional and industrial uses, so that mercury in measuring devices is phased out whenever technically and economically feasible.