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KERRY PUTS CHILDREN FIRST ON IMUS IN THE MORNING

**EXCERPT FROM DON IMUS CONVERSATION WITH
U.S. SENATOR JOHN KERRY (D-MA)
MARCH 17, 2006**

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DON IMUS, MSNBC HOST: "Please welcome now to the IMUS IN THE MORNING program, the junior senator from the state of Massachusetts, Senator John Kerry."

SEN. JOHN KERRY (D) MASSACHUSETTS: "Good morning, Don Imus."

IMUS: "How are you?"

KERRY: "I'm doing great. It's been about a month, Dick Cheney hasn't shot anyone. We're doing great . "

IMUS: "You know, I was talking with -- before we talk about stuff that maybe you're interested in, I was talking with Senator Dodd the other day about this Combating Autism Act. And I said, is there any way you can call the CDC and talk to Gabordeen, whatever her name is over there, who's apparently not a nice woman, get them to get behind this, and so -- you know, this might be hard to believe. He actually followed up and did that."

KERRY: "Chris is terrific. That's Chris Dodd. He's superb. "

IMUS: "And the CDC apparently does support it, and do you know anything about it?"

KERRY: "I do. And let me tell you an amazing story. During the early days of Katrina, UPS very, very kindly, and so did FedEx, put together a couple of planes to fly stuff down. So I flew down to Lafayette to take the UPS down there and deliver it to those folks. And the UPS driver, I rode in the truck with the UPS driver, just he and myself, all the way to Baton Rouge, and he was talking, just started to talk. He tells me that he's got twins, and one of the twins got sick. The doctor says, well, we've got to give him a vaccination. They give him the vaccination while the kid is sick, and within days, this kid starts changing and showing symptoms. Low and behold, these are identical twins, same DNA, same (INAUDIBLE), the whole deal, same egg. And that child who was vaccinated has autism today. And this family is struggling with it. And they believe, they believe as deeply as they can, it's the thimerosal that caused this reaction.

This is -- you find this all over the country. You and Deidre have been terrific on this issue. And yet, we still have mercury in vaccinations around the country. It's absurd. I don't get it. We ought to stop, and we ought to pass that bill. "

IMUS: "Well, the Combating Autism Act actually does provide some funds for research, because we really don't know. We know that thimerosal is a neurotoxin, and that it's ethyl mercury, and it's 50 times stronger than the mercury we'd find in fish for example and so on. There's all kinds of statistics. But there really hasn't been -- despite what people say. And believe me, I've talked to a lot of them. There's been no definitive determination whether in fact there is a link between autism and thimerosal ."

KERRY: "That's absolutely true. That's absolutely true. Look, If I were a parent and I knew what I know just anecdotally from across the country, I wouldn't want it, and I wouldn't want to put it in my kid. And I think..."

IMUS: "Well, the CDC said..."

KERRY: "...parents ought to have that choice and that right. In fact, they do. Many of them are saying they're not going to do it, but a lot of them don't know about it."

IMUS: "The CDC in fact says that now. But the Combating Autism Act really is primarily to build these centers around the country, to provide these parents with the ability for early detection, with therapy and some financial support and that sort of thing, and there will be some research. But to think of it as a thimerosal bill, it isn't that. I mean, maybe..."

KERRY: "Well, it's to try start down the road, Don."

IMUS: " Exactly."

KERRY: " What I'm saying is that in a lot of choices you have to make in public life, you make them on a basis on a sort of cautionary principal. I mean, that's true, for instance, of global warming. I can't say to a certainty exactly what's going to happen, and the models differ about what's going to happen. But I can say to an absolute certainty, and I just got a NASA briefing on this the other day, that if things stay exactly as they are today, absent some unpredictable change in what's going on, within the next 30 years, the Arctic ice sheet is gone, not maybe, not if, the Arctic ice sheet is gone. And already you have the Greenland ice sheet beginning to melt. The Greenland ice sheet, unlike the Arctic ice sheet, is on rock. It's out of the water. If that melts, you have a level of sea increase that wipes out Boston Harbor and New York Harbor. I mean, It's just stunning what we're looking at. And yet, there's no -- Europe, other countries are responding. The United States remains oblivious. Or at least the administration remains oblivious."