

I voted Yes on H.R. 6190, the Asthma Inhalers Relief Act.

This bill would allow a remaining inventory of FDA-regulated over-the-counter CFC epinephrine inhalers to be sold in the United States until August 1, 2013. This legislation is intended to allow 1.2 million CFC inhalers in storage to be sold before the CFC products are removed from the market permanently.

Epinephrine inhalers have been sold over the counter to individuals suffering from asthma for four decades. Because it is available without a prescription, epinephrine inhalers are often used in emergency situations, especially when a person experiences an asthma attack but cannot reach a doctor or hospital.

However, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer limited the production and consumption of "ozone-depleting substances," including certain inhalers, because CFC propellant systems can have a deleterious effect on the environment. In 1990, Congress enacted the policies of this international treaty to phase out the use of CFCs in the U.S. While such inhalers were ultimately exempted from this phase out until the end of 2011, there are still 1.2 million units remaining in storage.

I supported this bill because it would allow the remaining inhalers that are safe and effective to be sold to asthma sufferers – and not go to waste when patients could use them - before the ban on CFC inhalers is made permanent.

H.R. 6190 failed by a vote of 229 – 182, because it did not gain a two-thirds majority required under suspension of the rules.