

## Linda Reinstein Oral Comments

Thank you for joining us today to discuss the dangerously inadequate EPA Draft Risk Evaluation for Asbestos. I'm Linda Reinstein the cofounder of the [Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization \(ADAO\)](#) and a mesothelioma widow.

In keeping with ADAO's tradition, we are dedicating the press conference to Mike Mattmuller who died from preventable mesothelioma just after his 38th birthday in April. Mike leaves behind a young wife and baby.

Today, you'll be hearing from leading experts and stakeholders who have carefully reviewed the draft evaluation and will highlight their concerns.

Since 2004, ADAO, an independent nonprofit organization, has been dedicated to preventing asbestos exposure to eliminate all asbestos-caused diseases. Each day, asbestos exposure continues in homes, schools, workplaces, and the environment throughout our nation, yet asbestos remains legal and lethal in our country today.

**The facts are irrefutable.** Each year, nearly 40,000 Americans die from preventable asbestos-related diseases. Nearly 70 countries have banned asbestos, yet the United States is leading the race to the bottom in its inability to act. . Our government has failed time and time again to ban this known carcinogen. Since 1989, we have consumed nearly 400,000 metric tons of asbestos and buried one million Americans.

As Congress considered improving our chemical laws, asbestos was the poster child for the need to reform the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976. Initially, we breathed a sigh of relief in 2016 when the Lautenberg Chemical Safety Act (LCSA) was signed into law and EPA selected asbestos for one of its first risk evaluations. However, EPA's actions have been disappointing, to say the least. Implementation of the new TSCA for asbestos has been a frustrating struggle. We aren't alone in thinking this: The EPA's own scientists and civil servants have expressed

deep concerns with the agency's approach, as reported last year by the New York Times.

Today you will hear about the unfortunate omissions and flaws in EPA's Draft Risk Evaluation from a variety of experts and advocates. In brief, the evaluation:

1. Excludes legacy asbestos despite a ruling from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals last year saying that EPA is obligated to evaluate these risks.
2. Examines one type of asbestos fiber — chrysotile — and excludes the other five commercial asbestos fibers.
3. Only evaluates the risks of lung cancer and mesothelioma, and does not consider other types of cancers or pleural diseases.
4. Ignores asbestos contamination in talc-based products, even though asbestos has been found in crayons and toys.
5. Excludes the Libby Amphibole asbestos which is contained in attic insulation found in 15 – 30 million homes in the US.

Because of these and other flaws, we are deeply skeptical that EPA will put in place a full asbestos ban under TSCA or act with urgency. Americans need and deserve legislation to finish the job EPA stated in 1989 to ban asbestos.

ADAO and many speakers today have submitted comments into the official docket. Please contact us if you would like a copy of these submissions or need documentation for anything mentioned in their remarks.

You can submit your questions using the chat box and we will get to them after the speakers conclude their remarks. Thank you again for being here and for understanding this draft risk evaluation would leave America dangerously unprotected from asbestos.