



September 16, 2020

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The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Paul Tonko
Chairman, Subcommittee on Environment
2369 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Shimkus
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Environment
2217 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: SUPPORT: Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act (H.R. 1603)

Dear Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member Walden, Subcommittee Chairman Tonko and Ranking Member Shimkus,

On behalf of the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAO), I would like to thank you for your steadfast support on the [Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act](#) (ARBAN) (H.R. 1603). Thanks to your leadership and the tireless work of your staff, we have made great progress towards banning asbestos over the last eighteen months. Without your commitment, we would not have been able to take these landmark steps forward for public health. We understand how difficult these last eight months have been with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. We cannot thank you enough for remaining engaged in the vital effort to eliminate asbestos from U.S. commerce and protect Americans from death and serious diseases caused by asbestos exposure.

As fires rage through California, Oregon, and Washington state, the ARBAN-mandated study of legacy asbestos is now more important than ever. Events like these are devastating and unpredictable, but seeing asbestos-induced diseases decades later in these same communities is a tragedy we can prevent if we have the information necessary to protect families and brave first responders. This is why we need ARBAN.

With your dedication and commitment, the Energy and Commerce Committee approved ARBAN by a bipartisan vote of 49-1 on November 19, 2019. The final Manager's Amendment is a bill Members and stakeholders can all agree upon. If enacted, ARBAN would ban nearly all importation and use of asbestos (chrysotile, actinolite, amosite, anthophyllite, crocidolite, and tremolite) and the Libby Amphibole (richterite, winchite) within one year. The fifteen U.S.

U.S. chlor-alkali plants currently using asbestos diaphragms would transition to alternative processes in ten years after enactment. There would be a comprehensive study of risks presented by “legacy” asbestos in homes, schools, and workplaces. The new Right-to-Know program would also require all importers and users of asbestos and asbestos-containing products during the last three years to inform both the EPA and the public as to how and where asbestos was used.

The bill’s continuing momentum includes nearly 70 House and Senate cosponsors and a growing list of ARBAN stakeholders included below my signature.

Since the November markup, multiple letters in favor of ARBAN were sent to Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Leader Hoyer by [supporters of the bill](#), nearly 40 leading asbestos [scientists and experts](#), and [ADAO](#). This week, scientists reiterated their support for ARBAN in their [September 16th letter](#) to House Leadership.

Furthermore, EPA's Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals (SACC) recently released its extensive report on EPA's draft risk evaluation for asbestos. The [SACC's report](#) is a scathing critique of the EPA’s draft evaluation, and confirms and reiterates the deficiencies that many of us had identified and expressed deep concern about in our comments to EPA on the draft.

The SACC’s rejection of the draft risk evaluation for both its scientific inadequacies and its failure to address vital segments of the population exposed to asbestos demonstrates that EPA is not on a path to regulate asbestos anytime soon. Thus, it is more important than ever before for Congress to ban this dangerous substance. The time for action is now.

With sincere thanks,

Arthur L. Frank MD, PhD, Co-Chair Scientific
Advisory Board ADAO
Brent Kynoch, Environmental Information
Association

Richard A. Lemen, Ph.D., MSPH, Assistant Surgeon
General, U.S. Public Health Service (ret.) and Co-
Chair Scientific Advisory Board ADAO
Celeste Monforton, DrPh, MPH
Linda Reinstein, President and CoFounder of ADAO
Robert Sussman, JD

ADAO Supporters: Attorneys General of California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia: AFL-CIO; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; American Federation of Teachers; American Public Health Association; Beautycounter; Breast Cancer Prevention Partners; Campaign for Safe Cosmetics; Canadian Environmental Law Association; Center for Environmental Health; Collegium Ramazzini; Environmental Health Strategy Center; Environmental Information Association; Environmental Protection Network; Environmental Working Group; The Fealgood Foundation; Global Ban Asbestos Network; GO 2 Foundation for Lung Cancer; Hazards: International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers; International Association of Fire Fighters; Kids In Danger; Less Cancer; Natural Resources Defense Council; OK International; Public Citizen; Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families; Toxic-Free Future; Union of Concerned Scientists; United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry; United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America; United States Public Interest Research Groups; and internationally, Associação Brasileira dos Expostos ao Amianto.

Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization is a registered 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization
"United for Asbestos Disease Awareness, Education, Advocacy, and Community Support"
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