



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS®

HAROLD A. SCHAITBERGER
General President

EDWARD A. KELLY
General Secretary-Treasurer

September 28, 2020

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the 322,000 professional fire fighters and emergency medical responders of the International Association of Fire Fighters, serving communities in every Congressional district of our nation, I ask you to vote YES on H.R. 1603, the Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act of 2020.

Every day across America, fire fighters rush into burning buildings to save lives and limit property loss. As a result, fire fighters experience a higher risk of unsafe exposure to asbestos compared to the general population. Exposures to asbestos occurs when fire fighters enter burning buildings, extinguish fires and open walls and ceilings to check for fire extension. Airborne asbestos fibers settle on turnout gear and station clothing before they are transferred from the fire scene to apparatus cabs and eventually transported back to fire stations. These daily occurrences account for thousands of unsafe exposures for fire fighters each year.

Over the course of a fire fighter's career, they will inhale large amounts of microscopic asbestos fibers, increasing their risk of developing an asbestos-related disease such as mesothelioma, lung cancer and asbestosis. It is worth noting that a multi-year study identified fire fighters suffering from mesothelioma at a rate that is 200 percent greater than the U.S. population as a whole. Fortunately, this problem can be solved in part, by eliminating the occurrences of asbestos exposure.

The Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act raises exposure prevention to a new level by prohibiting the inclusion of asbestos fibers in common building materials and construction products, such as flooring and ceiling tiles, roofing, cement, textured coatings, fiberboard and insulation. Simply put, banning asbestos and asbestos-laden products today will result in healthier and safer fire fighters tomorrow. Voting yes on this bill will move to eliminate the harmful health impacts of this poison and reduce the numbers of fire fighters experiencing asbestos-related illnesses each year. The IAFF asks you to vote YES on H.R. 1603.

Thank you for your continued support of our nation's fire fighters and emergency medical responders.

Sincerely,

Harold A. Schaitberger
General President