



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
For science. For action. For health.

March 19, 2019

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici
U.S. House of Representatives
2231 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Elissa Slotkin
U.S. House of Representatives
1531 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Merkley, Representative Bonamici, Chairman Pallone and Representative Slotkin:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals who champion the health of all people and communities, I write to express our support for the Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act of 2019, legislation to eliminate human exposure to asbestos.

APHA strongly supports your legislation which would ban the manufacture, sale, export or importation of asbestos-containing products, create a right-to-know program to inform the public about the presence of asbestos in U.S. commerce and require a comprehensive study into the risks of asbestos exposure in homes, schools, workplaces and other public places. The science about the dangers of asbestos is clear and we thank you for your efforts to protect the public from exposure to this deadly substance.

There is overwhelming consensus in the scientific community that there is no safe level of exposure to asbestos. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the International Agency for Research on Cancer and the Collegium Ramazzini, among other expert public health organizations, conclude that all types of asbestos fibers, including chrysotile, are human carcinogens. Specifically, asbestos causes mesothelioma and cancer of the lung, larynx and ovaries. Exposure to asbestos is also strongly associated with asbestosis and pleural disease.

Thank you for your leadership in introducing this important legislation to help protect the public from exposure to dangerous asbestos-containing products.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Georges C. Benjamin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director