



March 29, 2023

Board of Directors

Kimberly Cecchini

Ellen Costa

Linda Reeves

Linda Reinstein

National Spokesperson

Jordan Zevon

Science Advisory Board

Arthur L. Frank, MD, PhD
Co-Chair

Richard Lemen, PhD,
MSPH
Co-Chair

Dr. Brad Black

Dr. Barry Castleman

Dr. Raja Flores

Dr. Michael Harbut

Dr. Steven Markowitz

Dr. Jacqueline M. Moline

Dr. Christine Oliver

Prevention Advisory Board

Brent Kynoch
Chair

Mark Catlin

Claire Deacon

Tom Laubenthal

John Newquist

Tony Rich

Mark Winter

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for the Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act of 2023

Dear Senator Merkley and Representative Bonamici:

On behalf of the Asbestos Diseases Awareness Organization (ADAO), an independent nonprofit, I write to express our strong support for the Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now (ARBAN) Act of 2023. We greatly appreciate your unwavering leadership and steadfast commitment to public health, as seen in your 2017, 2019, 2022, and now your 2023 legislation to ban commercial asbestos. With the passage of your bill, the United States will finally join nearly 70 countries that have banned asbestos.

The facts are irrefutable: Asbestos, a known carcinogen, is the most hazardous substance used widely since the industrial revolution. There is no safe or controlled level of exposure to asbestos. When inhaled or ingested, microscopic asbestos fibers can become lodged in tissue and cause mesothelioma and cancers of the lung, larynx, and ovaries. Asbestos exposure is also associated with cancers of the pharynx, stomach, and colorectum and causes asbestosis and other painful and disabling lung diseases. According to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, an estimated 40,000 Americans die from asbestos every year. We must act to stop this unnecessary disease and death.

The Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act is comprehensive legislation that will:

- **Prohibit the importation and commercial use of all six asbestos fibers** (chrysotile, crocidolite (riebeckite), amosite (cummingtonite-grunerite), anthophyllite, tremolite, and actinolite) as well as Libby Amphibole, winchite, and richerite.
- **Transition plants in the chlor-alkali industry** using asbestos diaphragms to non-asbestos technology within two years.
- **Develop an educational outreach program** to support full compliance with ARBAN.

The chlor-alkali industry is the sole importer of raw chrysotile asbestos, which it uses to manufacture industrial chlorine and caustic soda. Since 2016, the chlor-alkali industry has decreased the number of plants that depend on asbestos diaphragms from 17 to 6, a transition that demonstrates that non-asbestos technology is not only feasible, but makes good business sense.

The chlor-alkali industry's importation of more than 300 metric tons of raw chrysotile asbestos from Brazil and China in 2022, despite the availability of cost-efficient non-asbestos technology, is deeply concerning. This marks a staggering 300% increase in asbestos imports compared to 2021.

The chlor-alkali industry's importation of more than 300 metric tons of raw chrysotile asbestos from Brazil and China in 2022, despite the availability of cost-efficient non-asbestos technology, is deeply concerning. This marks a staggering 300% increase in asbestos imports compared to 2021.

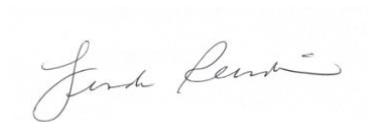
As an act of Congress, ARBAN will avoid time-consuming litigation over the Environmental Protection Agency's pending rulemaking and prevent delays in protecting Americans from asbestos exposure. In comparison to the EPA rulemaking, ARBAN would also permanently close the door to all importation and commercial use of raw asbestos and asbestos-containing products – not just for chrysotile, but for all six asbestos fibers and the Libby Amphibole and for all uses of these fibers. This is the kind of complete and unambiguous protection Americans deserve.

We appreciate your long-standing commitment to protecting public health and are excited to collaborate with you to ensure the passage of ARBAN into law. We are also in the process of gathering letters of support from organizations such as the American Public Health Association (APHA), Collegium Ramazzini, International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), and Environmental Information Association (EIA).

We stand together for an asbestos-free nation.

With deep respect,

Linda



Linda Reinstein

President and Cofounder Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization