



The Environmental Information Association

March 29, 2023

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 Senators Merkley and Representative Bonamici:

On behalf of the Environmental Information Association (EIA), a non-profit membership organization of persons involved in the asbestos abatement industry, I write to express EIA's strong support for the Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now (ARBAN) Act of 2023. We greatly appreciate your continuing commitment to ban commercial asbestos that has continued for many years. With the passage of ARBAN, the United States will finally join nearly 70 countries that have banned asbestos.

The members of our association know the facts around asbestos, and they are irrefutable. There is no safe level of exposure to asbestos. That is why the only logical solution to the continuing legacy of asbestos disease in the US is to fully and completely ban asbestos.

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.

EIA's multidisciplinary membership will collect, generate and disseminate information concerning environmental and occupational health hazards in the built environment to property owners and operators, interested professionals and the public.

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It is deeply concerning that in 2022, the chlor-alkali industry imported more than 300 metric tons of raw chrysotile asbestos from Brazil and China, even though non-asbestos technology is more cost-efficient.

As an act of Congress, ARBAN will avoid time-consuming and unproductive litigation over the Environmental Protection Agency's pending rulemaking and prevent delays in protecting Americans at risk 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.

Thank you for your long-standing commitment to protecting public health. We are eager to work with you to see ARBAN become law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Brent Kynoch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long, trailing flourish at the end.

J. Brent Kynoch
Managing Director