



May 26, 2022

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Merkley and Representative Bonamici:

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 strong support for the Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act. APHA appreciates your leadership on this legislation to ban the import, manufacture, process or distribution of commercial asbestos.

Passage of your bill is critically important because asbestos continues to be imported and used in the U.S. In 2021, the U.S. International Trade Commission indicates that 100 metric tons of raw asbestos were imported to the U.S. In the first quarter of 2022, 114 metric tons have already been imported to ports in Houston-Galveston, Los Angeles, New Orleans, and Norfolk, Va. Without a ban on asbestos, the U.S. will never be able to reduce the incidence of asbestos-related cancers. ARBAN will put the U.S. on a path to ban asbestos and join nearly 70 countries that have already done so.

The scientific evidence is unequivocal. Asbestos is a potent carcinogen and there is no safe level of exposure to it. Asbestos causes mesothelioma and cancer of the lung, larynx, and ovary. It is also associated with excess risk of cancers of the pharynx, stomach, and colorectum. An estimated 40,000 Americans die from an asbestos-related disease every year.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Georges C. Benjamin'.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director