



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh Joins Coalition in Urging Congress to Support Asbestos Ban

Letter from Attorneys General Blasts EPA's Flawed Process for Evaluating Asbestos Risk

BALTIMORE, MD (July 12, 2019) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh, as part of a 18-state coalition, today announced support for the “Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act of 2019” (Reinstein Bill), H.R. 1603. The Reinstein Bill would prohibit the manufacture, importation, processing and distribution in commerce of asbestos in any of its forms and reinstate an asbestos ban that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) attempted to adopt 30 years ago. Asbestos is one of the most harmful chemicals known to humankind, with no safe level of exposure. It is banned in more than 60 countries. It is linked to mesothelioma, a deadly form of lung cancer.

“Asbestos is a known carcinogen that is dangerous to the environment and to humans,” said Attorney General Frosh. “We must prohibit all uses of this hazardous substance and follow the lead of dozens of other countries in protecting our residents and our environment from the significant health risks associated with asbestos.”

Eighteen attorneys general voiced their support for the Reinstein Bill in a [letter](#) to the chairpersons and ranking members of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change in the U.S. House of Representatives. The letter calls for stronger protections against exposures to asbestos, and urges Congress to require the EPA to report to Congress on the risks of legacy asbestos currently present in buildings and found on aging tiles, adhesives and piping. EPA’s current plan to evaluate the risks posed by asbestos leaves gaping holes, failing to assess the risk presented by legacy asbestos, as well as imported raw asbestos, which the agency terms as a “naturally occurring substance.” The coalition underscores the Reinstein Bill as being especially important since the EPA has demonstrated its inability and unwillingness to address the risks to environment and human health posed by asbestos. The letter also blasts the EPA’s Significant New Use Rule for opening the door to new uses of asbestos. The EPA’s new rule moves our country in the exact opposite direction we should be headed for this dangerous chemical.

In addition to Maryland, the letter was signed by the attorneys general of California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

