

International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers

1750 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006



Phone: (202) 662-0842
Fax: (202) 662-0894
Email: jnigro@smart-union.org

Joseph J. Nigro
General President

March 13, 2015

To all Senators,

On behalf of the members of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART), we respectfully ask for you to co-sponsor and support the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act – S. 697 – introduced by Senators Tom Udall and David Vitter and a balanced bipartisan group of cosponsors on March 10, 2015.

S. 697 will amend and strengthen the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976, which is not working as Congress intended and has not been amended since it was passed in 1976. We believe S. 697 represents a clear, politically achievable improvement to America's federal chemical safety regulations.

This legislation has been negotiated in a bipartisan process for over two years. It provides clear, responsible, and politically achievable improvements to America's chemical safety laws to protect public health, worker health and the environment. Some key benefits of S. 697 include greater authority for the EPA to test chemicals, obtain and provide chemical information, protect vulnerable populations, and take action against chemicals determined to harm human health. Safety reviews for all chemicals in commerce are mandated and new chemicals will require a safety finding before they can enter the marketplace. Importantly, S. 697 will replace the failed TSCA cost-benefit safety standard (which prevented action against asbestos using TSCA) with a health-based safety standard. It includes fees on industry to adequately fund safety testing and sets achievable, enforceable timelines for the EPA to make determinations.

Progress has been made since a version of this legislation was first introduced in 2013 on the complex issue of when federal chemical action on a chemical can preempt state action. The EPA will have authority for high priority chemical testing and regulation and states can continue to regulate in the absence of EPA action and retain all regulations enacted before 2015. States can seek waivers to address specific local conditions and can propose substances for EPA prioritization.

Please take this opportunity to end four decades of a failed law. We look forward to working with you to help address any remaining issues and ask for your support of S. 697.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph J. Nigro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

JOSEPH J. NIGRO
General President