

## **Statement of Support for the Ban Asbestos in America Act of 2007**

Americans are dying at the rate of one per hour from past use of asbestos and the continuing contamination it leaves behind. National and international authorities agree that even slight exposures to asbestos carry some risk of cancer, and there are many tragic examples of this.

The US is practically the only industrial nation (along with Canada, a major exporter of asbestos) that has not banned asbestos. As a result, even though very little asbestos is used in American industry, asbestos brakes, asbestos-cement panels, and other asbestos products not made here continue to be imported. These imported products endanger workers and the general public, while competing against safer products made in the USA.

In addition, the presence of asbestos as a contaminant of other minerals, vermiculite, talc, and stone, has not received the attention it deserves. This has resulted in environmental and occupational hazards at quarries and mines and the asbestos contamination of consumer products. The government urgently needs to analyze this problem from coast to coast and take appropriate regulatory action to protect public health and the environment.

Over 40 countries have banned asbestos, including all of Europe and countries around the world, the latest to announce bans being Peru and South Korea. The US EPA tried to ban all major uses of asbestos in 1989, but the regulations were overturned in a court challenge. It now falls to the Congress to shut down what little asbestos use remains in the US economy and close the door to deadly asbestos product imports.

We therefore support the enactment of S. 742, the Ban Asbestos in America Act of 2007, sponsored by Senators Patty Murray, Harry Reid, Clinton, Kennedy, Durbin, Feinstein, Baucus, Boxer, Leahy, Casey, Brown, Cardin, Feingold, Harkin, Kerry, Lieberman, and Whitehouse.

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**Signatory Groups in the United States:**

AFL-CIO	(Peg Seminario)
Service Employees International Union	(Bill Borwegen)
Natural Resources Defense Council	(Jennifer Sass)
Asbestos Diseases Awareness Organization	(Linda Reinstein)
White Lung Association	(Jim Fite)
Environmental Working Group	(Jane Houlihan)
Greenpeace	(Rick Hind)
New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health	(Joel Shufro)
Health Care Without Harm	(Bill Ravanese)
Commonweal	(Charlotte Brody)
Kentucky Environmental Foundation	(Elizabeth Crowe)
Center for Environmental Health	(Caroline Cox)
Center for International Environmental Law	(Glen Wiser)

Environmental Health Fund (Gary Cohen)  
Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice (Mark Mitchell)  
Healthy Child Healthy World (Christopher Gavigan)  
Clean New York (Bobbi Chase Wilding)  
Citizens Environmental Coalition (Steve Breyman)  
Center for Science in the Public Interest (Michael Jacobson)  
Making Our Milk Safe (Mary Brune)

Other Groups:

Canadian Auto Workers (Buzz Hargrove)  
Building and Woodworkers International (Fiona Murie)  
Ban Asbestos Network Japan (Sugio Furuya)  
Japan Occupational Safety and Health Resource Center  
Japan Association of Mesothelioma and Asbestos-Related Diseases Victims and  
Their Families  
Ban Asbestos Network of India (Gopal Krishna)  
Occupational and Environmental Health Network of India  
Brazilian Association of Asbestos Exposed People from Rio de Janeiro e Sao Paulo  
(Fernanda Giannasi)  
Asbestos Exposed People from Bahia (Brazil)  
Virtual-Citizen Network for the Ban of Asbestos in Latin America  
Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (Larry Stoffman)  
National Committee on Environmental and Occupational Exposures  
BC and Yukon Building Trades Council  
BC Federation of Labor  
United Food and Commercial Workers British Columbia  
BC Government and Services Employees Union  
United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 170  
Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union  
Canadian Union of Public Employees BC Region  
Labor Environmental Alliance Society  
Occupational Health Clinic for Ontario Workers (Lyle Hargrove)