



March 28, 2023

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
U.S. 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 that 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.

While nearly 70 countries have already banned asbestos use, passage of your bill is critically important because asbestos continues to be imported and used in the U.S. The U.S. International Trade Commission reports that 300 metric tons of raw asbestos were imported in 2022 through the ports of Houston-Galveston, Los Angeles and New Orleans. Similar import numbers were reported in the previous decade. Without a ban on asbestos, the U.S. will never be able to prevent deaths from asbestos-related cancers and respiratory disease, which number about 40,000 each year.

The scientific evidence is unequivocal: exposure to asbestos poses a grave risk to health. There is no safe use of asbestos. Nearly every industry in the U.S. adopted alternatives to asbestos decades ago. The businesses that continue to import and use asbestos must be required to expeditiously phase out its use.

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

Sincerely,

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director