



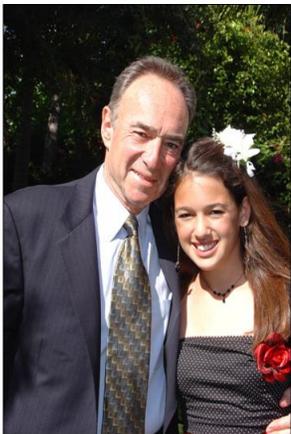
Prepared Statement of
Linda Reinstein
Executive Director and Co-Founder
Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization
Before the
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials of the
Committee on Energy and Commerce

Legislative Hearing on S. 742 and Draft Legislation to Ban Asbestos in Products

February 28, 2008

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Linda Reinstein.

Alan Reinstein - Mesothelioma Victim
1939 - 2006



May 2005



May 2006

I am honored to appear before you as Executive Director and Co-Founder of the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAO), an independent, nonpartisan, volunteer organization whose goal is to provide the most current educational resources and support. I am neither a lobbyist nor an attorney, only a volunteer and now a mesothelioma widow and single mother.

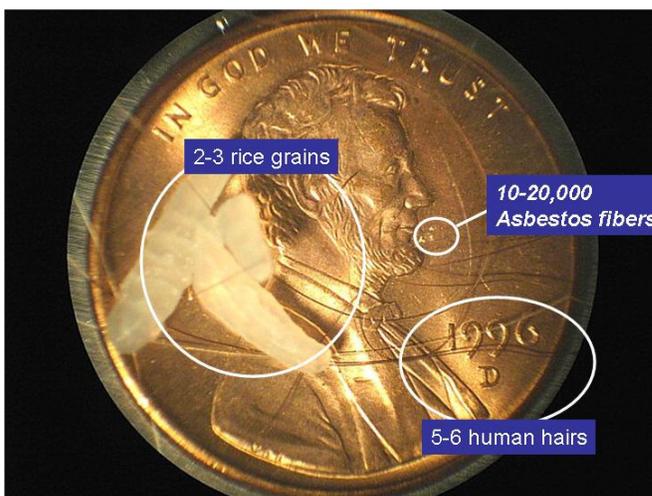
Today, Doug Larkin, TC McNamara and I represent victims and families who suffered the traumatic effects of asbestos diseases, due to occupational or non-occupational exposure. In 2006, my husband, Alan Reinstein, lost his three-year battle with mesothelioma, a cancer caused by asbestos. When Alan died, my then 13-year-old daughter and I joined thousands of Americans who are mourning the loss of loved ones: losses which could have been prevented.

Use and importation of all asbestos-containing products should be banned in the United States. As we discuss a complete product ban today, your final decision will determine if we will continue to allow asbestos to kill Americans or if Congress will pass legacy legislation banning asbestos in any form, product or use.

Scientists agree: Asbestos is a carcinogen and there is no safe level of exposure.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) declared asbestos a human carcinogen 30

How small is asbestos?



years ago. The Environmental Protection Agency, (EPA) World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) agree: there is no known safe level of asbestos exposure. The Penny slide you are looking at compares the nearly invisible deadly fibers just

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under President Lincoln's nose to grains of rice and human hair. These virtually indestructible asbestos fibers can be 700 times smaller than human hair and remain suspended in air from seconds to days.

Inhaling or swallowing asbestos fibers permanently penetrate the lung and other tissue and can cause cancers or respiratory diseases. Exacerbated by a latency period of 10 - 50 years, these diseases are routinely under-reported and frequently misdiagnosed.

More than 10,000 new victims and their families will suffer this year alone. Imagine struggling to breathe air through a pinched straw, for every breath, every minute, every day. As the victim's oxygen level becomes critically low, they are tethered to supplemental oxygen to delay and extend their inevitable agonizing death.

Within six to 12 months of diagnosis the average mesothelioma patient dies. Each life lost leaves a shattered family behind. But remember, there are 8,000 more patients dying from other asbestos-caused cancers, asbestosis or respiratory diseases.

In hopes of a cure, many patients opt for radical treatments, such as having a diseased lung or diaphragm surgically removed. We call this death by 1,000 cuts. Multiple surgeries, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments are common and can cost the patient and his family in excess of \$1 million dollars.

Asbestos has not been banned in the United States. When asked, most Americans believe that asbestos was banned long ago and are shocked to learn that asbestos is still a deadly threat. Even today, the EPA states there are 3,000 products containing asbestos, yet there is no federal asbestos testing program for consumer products or children's toys.

Products Found to Contain Asbestos



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ADAO commissioned three independent, government certified laboratories to test for asbestos in consumer products. We tested random consumer products taken from American retail shelves and confirmed asbestos in five products.

We found tremolite asbestos, one of the deadliest forms of asbestos, in a

toy powder intended to be made airborne by children. On 11.28.07 we reported contamination in: the Planet Toys CSI Fingerprint Examination Kit (a popular children's toy), DAP "33" window glazing, DAP "Crack Shot" spackling paste, Gardner "Leak Stopper" roof patch, and Scotch Duct Tape. Previously, research by others also found asbestos in children's play clays and crayons. Only private financial contributions and concern produced these results, which represent testing of only a very small fraction of the suspect domestic and foreign products on American shelves.

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Our recent test results were disclosed immediately and completely to the EPA and the CPSC. To the best of our knowledge, neither agency initiated any action based on our submitted product testing reports.

Americans trust and expect that their air, soil, and water are safe from toxic contaminants; but as victims, we know the truth. Just walk the streets of Libby, Montana, or New York City or talk to the U.S. Capitol Tunnel Workers, all innocent Americans exposed to asbestos now living with irreversible damage caused from asbestos. The stress and trauma is life altering, potentially deadly for those Americans with known asbestos exposure waiting for time, to reveal their medical fate.

The ADAO applauds the U.S. Senate for unanimously passing S. 742 a landmark bill to reduce asbestos exposure and fund educational programs, research, registries and treatment centers. However, S. 742 does not completely ban asbestos use and perpetuates a false sense of security by only prohibiting industrial materials, consumer products, and toys with greater than 1 percent asbestos content. This means that contaminated products, such as the CSI children's fingerprint kit, could legally remain on market shelves and will continue to threaten the health of American men, women and children.

The American public does not understand or care about the difference between ACP or ACM. Scientific technology has made gigantic strides in asbestos detection since the 1970s. We don't have to compromise public safety by using antiquated analytical standards.

On behalf of the ADAO, asbestos victims, and their families, I implore you to: Ban the use and importation of this deadly toxin. We believe that an immediate worldwide ban on all asbestos-containing products is fully justified, absolutely necessary, and long overdue. And yes, safer, affordable alternatives do exist. Support for a total asbestos ban comes from some of the most well respected members of the scientific community, health professionals and victims from around the world. I would like to ask to submit the signatures into the record.

One life lost to asbestos disease is tragic; hundreds of thousands of lives is unconscionable. The United States Congress has the opportunity and responsibility to protect Americans from these preventable asbestos-related diseases.

Thank you.