



01May 2018

Senator Ron Richard
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Representative Todd Richardson
Speaker of the Missouri House of Delegates
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Dear Senator Richard, Speaker Richardson and all members of the Missouri Senate and Assembly,

We would like to bring to your attention what we believe the unintended consequences that House Bill 1645 would have upon our members and the veterans' community in general. Veterans may only represent 8% of the nation's population, but they comprise an astonishing 30% of all known mesothelioma deaths that have occurred in this country. Exposure to asbestos is the only known cause of mesothelioma. Given the disproportionate impact this legislation will have on the veteran's community, I wish to identify our specific concerns.

This legislation robs veterans of their constitutional rights by giving asbestos corporations the power to delay and deny a claim until a veteran dies. Our veterans who suffer from mesothelioma, if they are lucky enough to determine a specific defendant who may be liable, should not have their cause of action delayed while they do or do not pursue claim against a personal injury trust. This places a great burden upon the veteran to identify all possible defendants before being able to act against one. This also forces veterans to wait indefinitely while they file a trust claim with little, or no, chance for a meaningful recovery. This legislation may well result in a suit not being brought, or adjudicated, prior to the veteran's death or incapacity to participate in their own trial.

The injustice this would be to our veterans is magnified by the fact that this legislation is unnecessary. Under current law, injured victims are already required to disclose their complete work histories and exposure information; in fact, victims are required to turn over any and all



information a judge deems relevant to court proceeding. Accordingly, asbestos corporations already they have the tools they need to defend themselves.

Missouri House Bill 1645 will make it much harder for veterans and their families to hold the asbestos companies accountable. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to oppose House Bill 1645.

Sincerely,

101st Airborne Division Association
Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association
Gateway Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans of America
Korean War Veterans Association
Military Veterans Advocacy
The United States Submarine Veterans Association