

Testimony of Dennis Phillips

RE: HB 2457

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee I, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. I am here on behalf of the Kansas State Council of Fire Fighters (KSCFF) in opposition to HB 2457.

Asbestos is one of many hazardous materials firefighters deal with in performing their duties. Many buildings and homes built before 1980 still contain asbestos. The asbestos can still be found in insulation, siding, floor tile, plaster, sheet rock and many other building materials. When buildings burn or collapse this causes the asbestos dust to become airborne. This dust can remain in the atmosphere long after the fire is extinguished and after a building collapse.

A multi-year study done by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) that started in 2010 studied nearly 30,000 firefighters from San Francisco, Chicago and Philadelphia to better understand the potential link between firefighting and cancer. This study was a joint effort led by researchers at NIOSH in collaboration with researchers at the National Cancer Institute and the University of California at Davis Department of Public Health Sciences and supported in part by the U.S. Fire Administration. This study was completed in late 2015. This study showed there were about twice as many firefighters with malignant mesothelioma, a rare type of cancer caused by exposure to asbestos. Exposure to asbestos while firefighting is the most likely explanation for this.

The KSCFF feel that HB 2457, would make it more difficult for Firefighters to receive a settlement from the Asbestos Trust Fund or in District Court. HB 2457

would add more steps for Firefighters who become ill from asbestos to be compensated,

The KSCFF would ask you to oppose HB 2457. I thank you for your consideration and time. I would be happy to stand for questions.

Dennis Phillips
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