FRICTION MATERIALS STANDARDS INSTITUTE, INC., E-210 ROUTE 4, PARAMUS, N. J. 07652

BULLETIN

NO. 596A

March 29, 1977

STATE OF NEW JERSEY--CANCER CONTROL ACT

On March 24, 1977 I sent the membership copies of the "Cancer Control Act" which had been introduced in the New Jersey State Senate on January 24, 1977. In that act, it was proposed that: "No person shall produce, manufacture or use or release onto or into the atmosphere, waters or lands of this State any of the following carcinogens..." Asbestos was included.

The following day, a news article was published advising that the principal sponsor of this legislation Senator John Skevin, was abandoning his effort to ban sixteen carcinogens as proposed in the "Cancer Control Act."

A copy of the news annouuncement as it appeared in the New York Times of March 25, 1977, is enclosed. The Asbestos Study Committee met on March 28, 1977 and this was discussed briefly. Based on withdrawal of this proposed legislation, the Committee did not recommend any action. This is for your information.

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E. W. Drislane
Executive Director

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NY TIMES - MARCH 25, 1977

Skevin Gives Up His Fight to Ban All Manufacturing of Carcinogens

State Senator Attributes Retreat to 'Organized' Opposition and Insufficient Public Support

By WALTER H. WAGGONER
Special to The New York Times

TRENTON, March 24—State Senator John M. Skevin, who has played a leading role in writing legislation designed to arrest New Jersey's cancer mortality rate, the highest in the nation, abandoned today his effort to bar the production and use of 16 known cancer-producing chemicals in the state.

He attributed his retreat to "organized opposition" to the ban and insufficient public support to offset it.

The Oradell Democrat, who is chairman of the special State Senate Commission on the Incidence of Cancer in New Jersey, has sponsored a series of bills attacking the cause of cancer, among them he proposed Cancer Control Act, which would have banned the 16 chemicals identified as carcinogenic.

Mr. Skevin said in a statement that, while pledging his continued support for sections of the cancer control package, he had decided to "eliminate the provision for the ban."

"Let me emphasize this re-evaluation of my position involves great soul-searching and is based on my deeply rooted belief that a public official is elected to office to represent the people and not to do the people's thinking for them," he said.

Mr. Skevin's battle had become virtually a one-man effort, and the final blow, he said in a telephone interview, was the opposition to the ban voiced in Washington recently by environmental interests who had earlier shown some support in the face of strong attacks by industry and organized labor.

"It is obvious to me that there is considerable opposition to such an outright ban, much of it emanating from industrial sources," Mr. Skevin's statement said. "It is also obvious to me that at least some of the opposition has been 'orchestrated' by the chemical industry and that scare tactics, specifically distortion of facts based on unrealistic estimates of possible wholesale unemployment, have been utilized."

"However, I will not belabor that point right now," the statement continued. "I do intend to pursue this aspect of the problem, the extent to which the American public is being brainwashed into accepting environmental cancer as an inevitable fact of life, at some future date."

The full force of industry's opposition to the proposed legislation emerged initially at a public hearing last Feb. 18 before the Skevin commission.

Joining with the spokesman for several industrial concerns was Charles A. Manate, president of the New Jersey State A.F.L.-C.I.O., who maintained that a chemical ban would be disastrous to the state's economy.

Support for the measure, with some reservations, came at that time from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation. But even that support dissolved at a Washington conference earlier this week, at which Mr. Skevin served as moderator for a seminar on cancer in New Jersey.

"The opposition by the environmentalists was the final blow," he said today.

He also noted that John J. Horn, Acting State Commissioner of Labor and Industry, had opposed the ban on the chemicals, and that others had also "lined up" behind the argument that the state would suffer severe economic harm, including the flight of industry to other states and resulting unemployment.

In the past, those who supported the Skevin measure argued that the savings in death, illness and medical costs would offset the other economic losses. That group has now apparently shifted to the more moderate position that calls for controls rather than an outright ban on the chemicals.



The New York Times
John M. Skevin

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B U L L E T I N

N O. 5 0 6

March 24, 1977

STATE OF NEW JERSEY--CANCER CONTROL ACT

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the "Cancer Control Act" which was introduced in the New Jersey State Senate on January 24, 1977.

You will note that in Paragraph 6, it is proposed that: "No person shall produce, manufacture or use or release onto or into the atmosphere, waters or lands of this State any of the following carcinogens:....asbestos...."

While the meaning of this could be very broad, it would undoubtedly be construed as banning the manufacture of asbestos based friction materials. This proposed law would effect only those in New Jersey, but if it should become law it follows that other jurisdictions would most likely introduce similar legislation. This "Cancer Control Act" will be an added agenda item at a meeting of the Asbestos Study Committee on March 28, 1977.

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