

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

November 6, 1981

BUDGET

The Honorable Richard S. Schweiker
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S. W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

CAP-1663

Dear Dick:

In the last two Congresses I have sponsored legislation to establish a special compensation system for victims of asbestos related diseases. I believe this legislation is an important first step towards necessary reform of our entire occupational disease compensation system.

In the past, I've relied on data from a document entitled "Estimates of the Fraction of Cancers in the United States Related to Occupational Factors." This document was prepared by a number of scientists in your Department at NIEHS, NCI and NIOSH and has received wide publicity since then. Secretary Joseph Califano referred to it in a 1978 speech where he made the claim that "at least 17 percent of all cancer deaths in the United States will be associated with previous exposure to asbestos."

As you may know, the claims made by the "Estimates Paper" have been criticized by a number of sources, but it continues to receive prominent attention and is often referred to as the official government position on occupation and cancer. I, therefore, request that your Department formally review the document and inform me of its status. It's essential that those of us in the Congress working on occupational disease issues have a clear statement from the Department of Health and Human Services regarding the validity of the data contained in the "Estimates Paper".

I appreciate your prompt consideration of this request.

Best regards,

Gary
Gary Hart