PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

UC-1950

Schools ordered to hunt asbestos health hazards

ALBANY, N.Y.—All public school districts must inspect their school buildings for possible asbestos-related health hazards and submit plans for eliminating such hazards under legislation Gov. Carey signed yesterday.

The governor also approved bills intended to streamline the workers' compensation program and encourage more doctors to participate in the program.

The two asbestos laws require districts to determine where the cancer-causing construction material was used and whether the material should be considered an imminent health threat.

Under the laws the districts must inspect their schools by Nov. 1 and the Education Department must report the results to Carey and the Legislature by Dec. 1. School districts by April 1, 1980, must suggest ways to eliminate any asbestos-related health hazards and the Education Department must make a complete report by Nov. 1, 1980.

A spokesman for Assemblyman Leonard Stavisky D-Queens, sponsor of the bill, said asbestos was widely used in buildings constructed between 1960 and 1971.

Asbestos is not considered a serious health hazard as long as it remains in solid form, the spokesman said. However, if the material begins to flake or peel, it would be considered an immediate health hazard, he said.

The spokesman said state education officials estimate that of 3.5 million students in 5,000 public schools across the state, about 1 million attend schools built with asbestos materials.

Stavisky contended that because the state requires children to attend school, the state should see that the school buildings are free of cancer-causing materials.

Education officials have estimated the survey will cost about $50,000. The laws contain no plans for funding for dealing with health hazards when they are identified.

One worker's compensation law allows injured employees to be treated through their private insurance policies while their claim is being processed.

Another permits doctors to be paid for their services to workers' compensation claimants while the case is appealed to court.

Previously, the physician had to wait until the appeal was settled.

Asbestos exposure: Suits proliferate, compensation scheme sought

"The level of litigation . . . is so high that the judicial system literally has no means to accommodate all the suits that are anticipated to be filed."

"If this Government . . . fails to pay its share of a fair, equitable, and exclusive compensation system for asbestos-related diseases, then this Government and its leaders will have shown themselves to be morally bankrupt."