

March 5, 2018

The Honorable Rick Wilborn
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
Room 541-E, State Capitol Building
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Re: Letter in Support of HB 2457 – March 8, 2018 Hearing

Dear Chairman Wilborn and Committee Members:

The National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC) is the largest property/casualty trade association in the country, with 1,400 regional and local mutual insurance member companies serving more than 135 million auto, home, and business policyholders and writing in excess of \$196 billion in annual premiums. More than 200,000 people are employed by NAMIC member companies. In Kansas, we have 183 member companies, including 11 domiciled companies, which underwrite 53% of the state's property and casualty insurance coverage.

Asbestos trust funds were created after decades of litigation and bankruptcies in order to fund care for asbestos victims. Independent studies have concluded, however, that the trust system is susceptible to abuse. There is evidence that some are filing claims with multiple trusts as well as lawsuits against others that contain contradictory allegations of liability.

HB 2457 will provide transparency in asbestos litigation by increasing access to relevant, necessary information about claims made with the asbestos trust funds. It is important to stress that nothing in this bill takes away the plaintiff's remedies against those who are responsible. And contrary to the misunderstandings of some that the bill's purpose is to delay assistance, the bill will actually result in claimants obtaining needed resources in a more timely fashion.

Further, it must be remembered that the abusive filings of some drain resources needed to aid victims who have yet to be compensated.

NAMIC appreciates your attention to this issue. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me. In the meantime, I remain,

Sincerely,



Mark Johnston
Regional Vice President – Midwest