

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6240

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As of January 20, 2014

**Title:** An act relating to retailer labeling requirements for asbestos- containing building materials.

**Brief Description:** Concerning retailer labeling requirements for asbestos-containing building materials.

**Sponsors:** Senators Billig and Rolfes.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Energy, Environment & Telecommunications: 1/21/14.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Staff:** Jan Odano (786-7486)

**Background:** Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fiber found in rock and soil. Because of its strength and heat resistance, asbestos is used as insulation and as a fire retardant. Exposure to asbestos is recognized as a health hazard. Breathing asbestos fibers can damage the lungs, and impair lung functions that may lead to disability and death. Asbestos also causes lung cancer and other diseases such as mesothelioma, which is a cancer of the membrane lining the lungs or stomach.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began regulating asbestos in 1973. In 1989, the EPA issued a rule that banned most uses of asbestos. However, that rule was overturned by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. This resulted in allowing most of the existing manufacture, importation, processing, or distribution of many of the products containing asbestos that were banned. Products containing asbestos that are not banned include the following: cement flat sheet, clothing, pipeline wrap, roofing felt, vinyl floor tile, cement shingles, cement pipe, millboard, automobile components, and non-roofing and roof coatings. Prohibited asbestos-containing uses include spray-applied surfacing, pipe insulation and block insulation on boilers and hot water tanks, artificial fireplace embers, and wall-patching compounds.

In 2013, legislation was passed that required labeling of asbestos-containing building materials. As of January 1, 2014, it is prohibited to manufacture, wholesale, or distribute for sale asbestos-containing building materials that are not labeled as required by federal or state

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law. Retailers that do not manufacture, wholesale, or distribute asbestos-containing building materials are exempt from these requirements.

**Summary of Bill:** Retailers that do not manufacture or distribute asbestos-containing building materials are exempt from labeling requirements.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.