



**Military Order of the Purple Heart
Department of Florida**

January 15 2020

The Honorable Tom Leek
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Tallahassee, FL 32399
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The Honorable Bob Rommel, Chair
House Civil Justice Subcommittee
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402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399 Bob.Rommel@myfloridahouse.gov

Chairman Rommel and Representative Leek;

The Military Order of the Purple Heart, Department of Florida, is very concerned about the effects that HB 741 could have on our membership as well as veterans and their families throughout the state.

Veterans comprise a very disproportional number of deaths related to mesothelioma in the country. As such, any efforts to make it harder for them and their families to pursue litigation to attain necessary monies for their treatments and well-being is something the MOPH will always object to.

HB 741 requires an individual to identify any and all possible defendants before it can initiate action for any claim. This will undoubtedly cause great delay in the person's pursuit of justice. Given the quickness in which mesothelioma results in death, no additional barriers should be placed in the way of recovery.

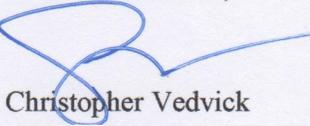
Further, HB 741 has the consequential effect of denying our veterans, and others, of their right to due process before their illness makes them too sick to attend a trial, or worse, causes their death.

HB 741 is an unnecessary piece of legislation. Current law already requires plaintiffs to disclose their employment histories and known & suspected exposure information. This provides defendant companies with all the information they need to defend themselves and identify any other possible defendants.

FACT: For decades manufacturers and distributors of asbestos intentionally kept hidden information on what they knew to be a dangerous product. This decision by those companies resulted in tens of thousands of veterans being exposed to asbestos and all of the illnesses that come with it. The Florida House should not move forward any legislation that makes it harder for these bad actors to be held accountable.

The Military Order of the Purple Heart, Department of Florida, respectfully urges you to reconsider your sponsorship and support of HB 741.

Your in Patriotism,



Christopher Vedvick

Commander
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Department of Florida

