

In late May, Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Arlen Specter (R-Pennsylvania) rolled out his second attempt this year to forge a compensation system for one of the country's most massive occupational-health problems. The Fairness in Asbestos Injury Resolution Act of 2006 proclaims an end to what many corporate defendants call a "litigation nightmare." But critics say the new bill simply dresses up the anti-lawsuit, pro-corporate agendas of its predecessor.

"A bad bill was simply made a lot worse," said Michael Tucker with the Committee to Protect Mesothelioma Victims, an advocacy group for patients with the rare asbestos-related cancer. Noting that the bill's biggest supporters include companies linked to hundreds of thousands of sicknesses and deaths, he added, "Victims have never been involved in crafting this legislation, and they've been left out in the cold yet again." Click here for complete article <http://newstandardnews.net>

UV SAFETY MONTH – SUNGLASSES, MORE THAN A FASHION STATEMENT

We all understand the importance of using sunscreen to protect our skin from the sun's harmful rays, but what about protection for our eyes? July is UV Safety Month, and across the nation Eye M.D.s are urging Americans to protect their eyes and their children's eyes by wearing sunglasses and wide-brimmed hats.

Recent studies have shown that prolonged exposure to the sun's invisible, high energy ultraviolet rays without protection may cause eye conditions that can lead to vision loss such as cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. During the summer month the level of ultraviolet radiation is three times greater than in the winter.

What type of sunglasses should you buy? The most important thing is to purchase sunglasses that block 99 to 1000 percent of the UV-A and UV-B rays. UV protection can come from adding chemicals to the lens material during manufacturing or from a chemical coating applied to the lens surface. A \$10 pair of sunglasses can provide equal or greater protection than a \$100 pair. With expensive sunglasses, you are paying for style, frame quality and options such as scratch-resistant coatings and not necessarily protective UV ray blocking.

WORKPLACE EYE SAFETY IS FOCUS OF HEALTH VISION MONTH

More than 2,000 U.S. workers receive medical treatment for work-related eye injuries. Annually another 800,000 eye injuries occur. The National Eye Institute along with other agencies, in an effort to reduce that number, is focusing on workplace eye safety as part of Healthy Vision Month.

Personal Protective Equipment is a very important part of a safe workplace. Not wearing the right eye protection, wearing equipment that does not fit properly along with not wearing any at all are the major causes of accidents. Common workplace eye hazards are windblown dust and debris, flying fragment of metal, wood, concrete and other material along with splashes from chemical and molten metal and hot sparks.

Employers and employees can assist in reducing their risks caused by injury by following some simple precautions:

- Conduct an eye-hazard assessment
- Remove or reduce all eye hazards where possible
- Provide appropriate safety eye protection for the types of hazards at the worksite
- Keep eye protection in good condition and assist workers with attaining the proper fit
- Use caution flags to identify potential hazards such as hanging or protruding objects
- Provide emergency sterile eyewash solution/stations near hazardous areas
- Post first aid instruction and information on how to get emergency aid
- Keep bystanders out of work areas and/or behind protective barriers

For more information visit www.healthyvision2010.org

GOVERNMENT PLAYS A NUMBERS GAME WITH INJURED AND SICK WORKERS

In 2003, 4.4 million workers were injured or made ill on the job, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported. While that's a staggering number of workers whose jobs hurt them or made them sick, what's more frightening is that may just reflect one-third of the injury of all work-related injuries and illnesses.

A study published in the *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* estimates that BLS figures underreport the real number of injuries and illnesses by two-thirds. That would mean 13.2 million hurt and sick workers in 2003.

Why the difference? The study—conducted by researchers from Michigan State University—used five different databases—the BLS survey and four others. The study also used person-to-person matching in three of the databases and company-to-company matching in all five to get a thorough picture of the number of injuries and illnesses. BLS uses a sampling method rather than the more accurate matching procedure.

Workplace safety experts have long said the government injury and illnesses numbers are far off the mark and several past studies have confirmed the discrepancies.