

## The Mesothelioma Bill [HL] – The Victims’ View



*“Through no fault of my own I have contracted mesothelioma and, due to the negligence of the firm and the government, I am not able to claim compensation in full. I will campaign to have the Bill changed as long as I live. Please listen to the voices of those suffering.”*

**David Bolt**

Dear Member of Parliament,

This pamphlet contains just some of the many hundreds of messages from mesothelioma sufferers and their families, asking the Government to make improvements to the Mesothelioma Bill. The insurance industry has had the ear of Government for two years, culminating in this Bill. Now, mesothelioma sufferers ask to be heard. Their words are painful to hear. Their call for 100% Justice is honourable, dignified, and compelling, deserving of your attention.

Asbestos Victims Support Groups Forum

## **The Mesothelioma Bill. Victims Call for Change**

Lord Freud, leading the debate on the Mesothelioma Bill in the House of Lords, referred to the failure of the insurance industry to maintain records of employers' liability insurance, as a "horrific blemish" on their reputation.

Unfortunately, the shame attached to the insurance industry was not sufficient for them to support the principal option contained in the 2010 consultation on supporting people who could not trace their insurers, i.e. full compensation for all asbestos victims who could not trace their insurer.

Instead, during negotiations with the Government insurers reluctantly moved from their position of no-change whatsoever to the least worst option of limiting payment to mesothelioma sufferers through a levy, at a reduced rate of 70%, backdated to 25 July 2012, thereby excluding 50% of asbestos victims from any payment whatsoever.

On several occasions Lord Freud referred to the insurers' threat of litigation if the scheme was improved. Even the inducement of £17m of tax payers' money to smooth the back payment over the first few years was not enough. They threatened to 'burden' business with increased premiums if the levy exceeded 3% of gross written premium. The Government disputed their figures, but gave way to their threats.

Mesothelioma sufferers recognise the intransigence of insurers and their long history of litigation and delaying tactics in paying compensation to people dying from mesothelioma, and respect the Government's attempts to make the insurers remedy what Lord Freud politely described as a 'market failure'. But too much was given to insurers.

During the protracted negotiations held with insurers for two years behind closed doors, while people died uncompensated, fairness and justice were lost. It was deemed 'unfair' to insurers that some who may not have been on risk at a particular time might be paying out, despite the fact that their 'tab' might well be picked up by other insurers. If this was rough justice, it was brought on themselves by their failures.

**So far, six thousand mesothelioma sufferers have lost compensation, saving the insurance industry more than £800m. But, the true cost to mesothelioma sufferers and their families is immeasurable. The cost in dignity, fairness and justice and the overwhelming heart breaking loss of life is spelt out in the next few pages.**

## Messages from Mesothelioma Sufferers

*I was 58 when I was diagnosed. I have worked since I was 15 and now can't even walk. I believe the Mesothelioma Bill needs to be changed.*

**Mr. John Bate (CH46 9QR)**

**[Angela Eagle MP]**

*I am a sufferer of this terrible disease. Believe me this is the worst that's happened to me and mine. Please Please Help.*

**Mrs. G.T. Davies (ST16 1EB)**

**[Jeremy Lefray MP]**

*Give us sufferers and our families the opportunity to live our final moments with dignity and peace of mind. No more fighting over something we didn't deserve.*

**Roy Moseley (STY 1NN)**

**[Joan Whalley MP]**



*I require 100% compensation as my health is 100% impaired, if not for me but for my spouse who will require my financial support when I am not here.*

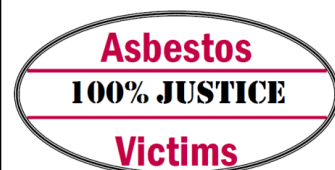
**Mr. Jeffrey Winstanley (L35 4QWE)**

**[Shaun Woodward MP]**

*Please change this Bill. I am an asbestos disease victim and I am very ill.*

**Mr. Josef Kodl (BY4 2DG)**

**[Andrew Mitchell MP]**



*Having worked from the age of 16 years as a carpenter I was diagnosed with mesothelioma in May 2012, aged 62 years. Upon seeking compensation I am currently unable to trace the insurance company responsible because I worked with asbestos as an apprentice 40 years ago. My anxiety is increased all the time by one thought that my wife will be financially compromised in the future.*

**Mr. Colin J Johnson (WS15 2QT)**  
**[Aidan Burley MP]**

*I am already a victim diagnosed in 2011. Why am I being victimised by not being diagnosed after 25 July 2012. A gross injustice!*

**Mr. Alan Kenyon(L37 6DX)**  
**[Bill Esterton MP]**

*I have mesothelioma and I was lucky and got compensation otherwise I really don't know how I or my family would have got through this dreadful disease. Please change the Bill.*

**C Shippen (NE 23 6HX)**  
**[Ronnie Campbell MP]**

*I never thought I would be exposed to asbestos diseases (suffer mesothelioma). During my apprenticeship from the age of fourteen as these diseases was never talked about, you just did the job given to you. No tradesman knew much about asbestos due to the neglect of the employers who exposed them to it.*

**Mr. J Fryers (M23 OLU)**

**[Paul Goggins MP]**

*Being a victim of this terrible disease I believe we need all the available benefit. 100% Justice is the least we can get.*

**Mr. George Dunmore**  
**(L25 OLS)[M aria Eagle MP]**

*We were not aware 50 years ago that just going to work on our daily jobs would give us life threatening lung disease with asbestos. We do not deserve to suffer like we do. Compensation should be 100% not 70%.*

**Mr. William J. Foster (WS6 6BZ)**  
**[Gavin Williamson MP]**

## Messages from Bereaved Families

*After being robbed of my husband and father of two sons why am I now being robbed of compensation for my children, and struggle to come to terms with the deal that has been struck between the Government and insurance companies. This is an insult to the memory of my husband.*

**Mrs. S. Hurrell (TS20 1JJ)**  
**[Alex Cunningham MP]**



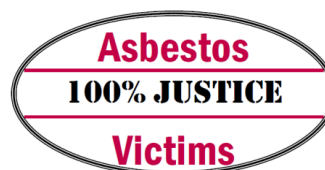
*This Bill is very unfair as my husband died 27/10/11 and misses out . I hope you will consider amending this Bill.*

**Mrs M.S. Murphy (HD5 9HG)**

**[Barry Sheerman MP]**

*My wife was diagnosed with mesothelioma in January 2012. Does this mean she suffered a horrendous death, which included a great deal of pain and mental anguish, but can only be recognised from 25 July 2012? How about you all get out there and visit the sufferers and see the real side of this hideous disease.*

**Mr. John Gordon. (ST3 6PE)**  
**[Robert Flello MP]**



*My husband died of the disease last year. He suffered a terrible death. Everyone with the disease should get 100% of what they are entitled to.*

**Mrs Janet Armson (NG19 9EZ)**  
**[Sir Alan Meale MP]**



Having just watched, and cared for and nursed my previously very fit 72 year-old husband through 7 months of hell and held him as he died on the 27 April 2013, ALL victims of this dreadful disease need all the help and compensation they are entitled to. We are still struggling to find the insurers of the garage my husband worked in for 18 years.

**Mrs. GE Brown (NN15 6UT)**

**[Philip Hollbone MP]**

*My husband was diagnosed in March 2012. Solicitors are unable to trace employers and insurers. The proposal will not help me when most needed.*

**Mrs. J.R. Hiscock (SO15 7QP) [Dr. Alan Whitehead MP]**

*I hope you never have to watch a loved one on oxygen fighting to get his breath, carrying it around to be able to live, or should I say exist. You have no idea what mesothelioma sufferers go through. I say change this Bill.*

**Mrs. F. Grinell ( B14 5EE)**

**[Steve McCabe MP]**

*Having witnessed the distressing and crippling nature of this disease and become a widow because of it, it is my strongly felt opinion that full compensation should be awarded to all sufferers of mesothelioma.*

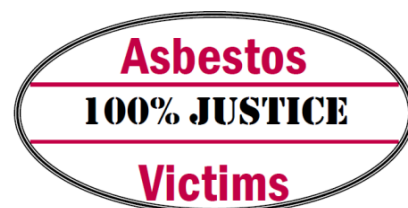
**Mrs Isabella White (SK23 6AG)**

**[Andrew Bingham MP]**

*I recently lost my father to this dreadful disease. How can you begin to think of denying victims their full compensation, having contracted this cruel disease through someone else's neglect? You are very good at clawing back/depriving money from innocent/vulnerable people. It has to stop!*

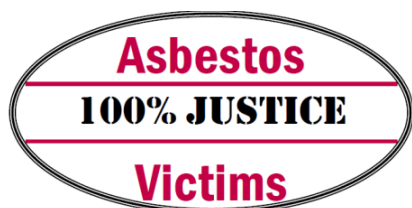
**Ms. A. Barraclough ( LE67 1EP)**

**[Andrew Bridgen MP]**



*My husband Ian was diagnosed with mesothelioma, 17 March 2009 and died 15 months later on 25 June 2010. During this time he battled for his life and for compensation. The High Court Judge said with "deep regret" he had to dismiss his case as no insurance could be found. I am left a wife, 2 children, 1 grandson and an unborn baby girl.*

**Mrs. Sharon Hall (DE72 3LA)**  
**[Pauline Latham MP]**



*My husband died in 2005 of mesothelioma, a very painful and stressful death. Two of the insurance companies were not traceable and the others did everything possible to get out of paying a penny. The sad thing was my husband died before he could see Justice for his suffering and death.*

**E. Haskins (M41 7NP)**  
**[Kate Green MP]**

*I do not often write letters of this nature but felt compelled to send this one. It was devastating when we learned that my husband was diagnosed with mesothelioma and had only a few months to live. He was very concerned about me financially and that did not help his health. When he heard he was eligible for compensation, it relieved him of a great deal of stress. The Government knew well in advance of the consequences of asbestos and ignored this knowledge. They should at least help fully all victims.*

**Mrs M.C. Brown ( CH4 7PN)**

**[Stephen Mosley MP]**

*I watched my husband suffer for 3 years and then his horrific end to this illness. I'm sure that if the Ministers in Parliament witnessed this they would change the Bill without any hesitation, as all victims suffer the same fate therefore deserve equal compensation.*

**Mrs. Sarah Lowe (B64 7LB)**

**[James Morris MP]**



*My father got no compensation as the firm had gone out of business and no insurer found. What does the future hold for myself and two sisters who fought for the pleasure of combing the white dust out of our Dad's thick curly hair? Just kids playing hairdressing. But that image upset my Dad during the nine months he lived and two months after my mother was diagnosed. He felt guilty having brought this on his family whilst doing the job he loved as a master carpenter. How can the government deny sufferers the justice they deserve?*

**Signed by a daughter who has lost both her mother and father to asbestos. Mrs. Christine Callan (B69 4TB) [John Spellar MP]**

*My husband was murdered. His name was Alan. My husband died aged 58 because he went to work everyday in places riddled with asbestos.*

**Kathleen Crouch (SE3 8NP)**

**[Clive Efford MP]**



*Have the victims of mesothelioma not been punished enough? This is a dreadful, incurable disease that has been acquired whilst earning a living. It is scandalous to plan this cut to 70%. My husband was a fit and healthy 64 year old who succumbed to mesothelioma, just 6 months after being diagnosed.*

**Mrs. D Gough (V36 1DG)**  
**[Angus Robertson MP]**



*To know that you are dying from a preventable illness through no fault of your own is bad enough. Add to this the knowledge that your loved ones income will be reduced on your death your last days would be made unbearable and add stress and worry to those left. This Bill needs to provide proper compensation for all sufferers.*

**Eileen Lowe (DY6 9EJ) [Chris Kelly MP]**

*If you haven't seen a man die of mesothelioma like I saw my husband in hospital then maybe you ought to go to a hospital. To see him go from a healthy active man to nothing, skin and bone, or anyone diagnosed with mesothelioma fall to pieces. It is heart wrenching, just terrible to watch a loved one like that. I'd hate to think anyone was suffering in that way. What if it was one of your family. God forbid it would happen.*

**Mrs. P.M. Barker (ST2 8ND) [Karen Bradley MP]**

*My dear husband died of mesothelioma on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011. I feel this Bill is very unfair as he worked hard all of his life, and suffered very much before he died. I hope you will look into amending this Bill so as to make it fair to everyone concerned.*

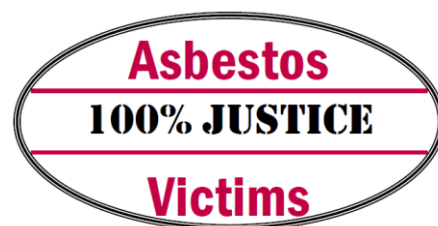
**Mrs. S. Murphy (HD5 9UG)**

**[Barry Sheerman MP]**

*Struggling for breath each and every day is dreadful and having to watch as a wife and a carer is heartbreaking. We need help now!*

**Mrs. J.P Williams (PR8 6LA)**

**[John Pugh MP]**



*For 6 months I watched my husband die a little bit more each day from this horrendous disease. Everyone who gets this disease deserves full compensation for their suffering. My darling Raymond passed away on 22/04/2009. He was a fantastic husband, father, and we miss him more each day.*

**Mrs. P.L. Mitchell (S6 1JN)**

**[David Blunkett MP]**

*My own husband, Paul Bennett, died on 22 July 2012 after being diagnosed five months previously with peritoneal mesothelioma, the result of his working with asbestos. He was a very skilled joiner and cabinet maker – a talent lost prematurely, along with his precious life.*

**Mrs. Rosemary Bennett (LE3 3HL)**

**[Stephen Dorrell MP]**

*My husband was diagnosed with mesothelioma in 2010 and died 34 days later, leaving me living off benefits. This Bill is unfair and unjust to people like me.*

**Mrs. Jean Meats (NG12 1DD)**  
**[Kenneth Clarke MP]**

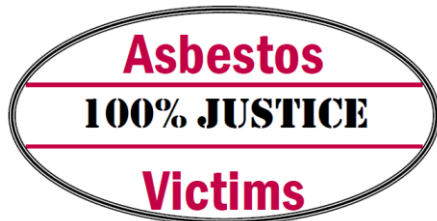


*My husband died within 2 months of diagnosis of mesothelioma. He was a strong, healthy man brought down to a weak, skeletal figure in that short time. Watching someone you love reduced to such a state is soul destroying. Compensation is our right for the negligence caused by governments over the years.*

**Mrs. Janet Bell (TF4 3HN)**  
**[David Wright MP]**

*My husband died from mesothelioma in 2012. He worked for a firm 1965-1973. The company no longer exists and had no insurance. Why should we be treated any different?*

**Mrs. S.Roxburgh (PO16 8EF)**  
**[Mark Hoban MP]**



*This devastating disease has ruined my life and that of my daughter by losing my husband at the age of 64. Please do not make matters worse by not meeting the 100% entitlement of claims.*

**Mrs. Liesbeth Chambers (GU34 5DJ)** **[Damian Hinds MP]**

*My husband was diagnosed with mesothelioma in April 2010. He lived just 13 months and passed away at the age of 63 years old. How horrified I am to see you are only paying compensation to people after 25 July 2012. My solicitors have been trying for 3 years to find the covering insurance company without success. I am left with my children who have lost their father and suffering every day just like me and thousands more.*

**Mrs. Lynda Mitchell (B79 8UJ)**

**[Christopher Pincher MP]**



*My husband diagnosed on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2012 and he died on the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2012. Please reconsider what you intend to do and think of the people that have suffered.*

**Mrs. Connie Rogers (PO9 1TB)**

**[David Willetts MP]**

*Come and spend time watching someone you love struggle to walk because of pain and lack of oxygen. My husband was 6ft 2in tall and now he is bent double struggling to walk.*

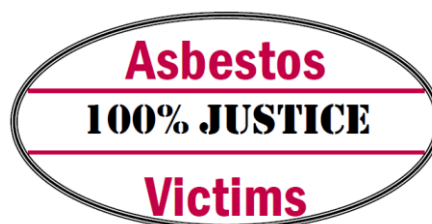
**Mrs. Judith Barclay (WS12 4LW)**

**[Aidan Burley MP]**

*My husband died of mesothelioma and left two children and grandchildren. How can our lives ever be the same? This Bill needs to be changed for all the sufferers/departed and families.*

**Mrs. Vicki Stark (CM4 7HH)**

**[Stephen Mosley MP]**



*My very active and healthy dad died of mesothelioma in 2010 aged 65. He should have been enjoying a happy and healthy retirement. He was struck down by this horrible disease and it was unnecessary. Workers should be compensated.*

**Sarah Bowness (L39 4QT)**  
**[Rosie Cooper MP]**

*You knew this material was dangerous and you continued to allow people to work with it. Workers should be entitled to monies owed to them. Watch one person suffer in the way we had to and then tell me they shouldn't get 100%.*

**Mrs. M. Prudames (HG3 2BJ)**  
**[Andrew Jones MP]**



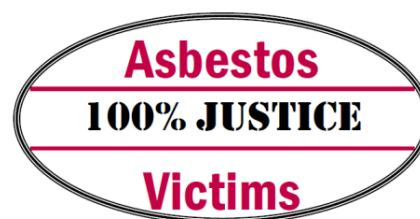
*It is so unfair. My husband worked hard and his reward was illness that could have been prevented. To make matters worse, his firm was not insured so therefore he did not get justice. He was still working 2 months before he died at 62 years.*

**Mrs. C.E. Rogers (M27 OHF)**  
**[Barbara Keeley MP]**

*Please think carefully about your decision. This is the last act anyone with mesothelioma can do for their loved ones. Provide for them for the time they won't be there. Please give them that comfort if nothing else.*

**Mrs. Margaret Walker**  
**(WA9 4XH)**

**[Shaun Woodward MP]**



*My husband was diagnosed in June 2012. Why should his family miss out? We are still suffering financially and emotionally and will for many years. Please help.*

**Mrs. Valerie Phillips (SO53 5NP)**  
**[Steve Brine MP]**

*Losing my son in 2010 has sealed my future – now it is bleak – his wife left desolated – his seven year old son and nine year old bereft – his sisters forever grieving – his younger brother needed his help. Now, we look to you for help. 100% please.*

**Shipley and Law family**

**(DY1 4AZ)**

**[Ian Austin MP]**

*In memory of my husband please compensate in full those suffering and in need. Most of them have contacted the disease doing an honest days work.*

**Mrs. Anne E. Davys (KT17 2NX)**

**[Chris Grayling MP]**

*70% is an insult to these families affected by mesothelioma. Someone needs to be held responsible for these deaths. I know my life will never be the same again!*

**Mrs. A Lockey (NE25 9EB)**

**[Alan Campbell MP]**

*My husband was diagnosed 18 June 2012 and died 22 June 2012 leaving two children behind aged 11 and 20. How cruel!*

**Mrs. Carol Douglas-Welch**

**( DD3 9TD)**

**[Jim McvGovern MP]**

*People should be safe at work. Where that right has been taken away, Justice should prevail. My Father paid the ultimate price for working hard for his family. This should not be ignored by the Government.*

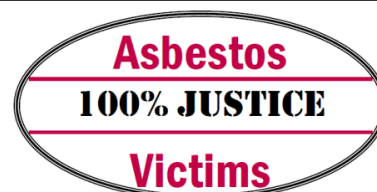
**Heather Irvine (CH43 2NQ)**

**[Frank Field MP]**

*It is bad enough to suffer from an incurable asbestos-related disease. To now discover that the compensation is being reduced is a sickening insult. Please change this Bill.*

**P. Clowes (LA6 1RH)**

**[Tim Farron MP]**





*It is bad enough to suffer from an incurable asbestos disease. To now discover that the compensation is being reduced is a sickening insult. Please change this Bill.*

**P. Clowes (LA6 1RH) [Tim Farron MP]**

*Everybody diagnosed with mesothelioma deserves 100% of entitlement. I know what they suffer after watching my husband die from it.*

**Mrs. E. Blythyn (WA8 4XN)**

**[Derek Twigg MP]**

*Reconsider! Knowing that your wife and family are going to have financial security takes some pressure off sufferers. Have you seen mesothelioma patients suffering? The Pain is unimaginable.*

**Mrs. G. Egerton**

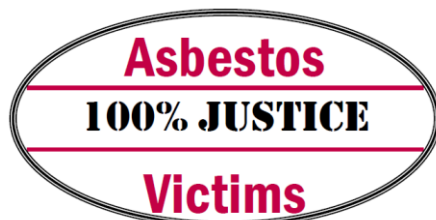
**(DH4 4PR)**

**[Bridget Phillipson MP]**

*Please help those suffering. My husband passed away with this disease 12 months ago. They deserve Justice as victims. I nursed my husband and I saw the suffering.*

**Mrs. M Williams (CH42 5PU)**

**[Frank Field MP]**



*All victims and their families deserve 100% of what they are entitled to as this is a disease that has come through pure neglect! My Father was incredibly fit, but in less than 3 months of being diagnosed he was dead due to asbestos and it has had a devastating effect on my family.*

**Mrs. Kerry Jackson (SG3 6QT)**

**[Grant Shapps MP]**

*My husband died from this entirely preventable disease contracted working for employers who placed value on profit not on the health and safety of the workforce. The government need to ensure that compensation is fair and set at 100%.*

**Mrs. Ellen Leonard (CH60 1UL.)**  
**[Alison McGovern MP]**

*Surely everyone who has suffered this awful disease has a right to compensation. I watched my husband suffer through this, watched him suffer to the very end. Why should he not have the right to compensation? He died 2011 in agony.*

**Mrs. M. Edwards (HA5 5BL)**  
**[Gareth Thomas MP]**

*"I'm disgusted because 90 per cent of the work I did was for people like the*



Picture Larrie Lewington with his daughter, Rebecca

*Ministry of Defence, police and hospitals. I now have this death sentence hanging over me for helping the government and they are trying to reduce the amount of money that I deserve. It's an absolute insult. I could have had another 20 years left, everything else is perfectly healthy except this horrible disease. No*

*amount of money will ever compensate what this has done to me and my family but it will help, and give me peace of mind that I can live without worry for the rest of my time."*

**Mr. Larrie Lewington**  
**MP David Cameron**

**This pamphlet has been printed and published by the  
Asbestos Victims Support Groups Forum**

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**The pictures are of mesothelioma sufferers and bereaved families who support the many hundreds of families who have written messages calling for improvements to the Mesothelioma Bill.**