

United States Senate
Office of the Democratic Leader
Washington, DC 20510-7010

October 6, 2004

The Honorable William Frist
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Leader:

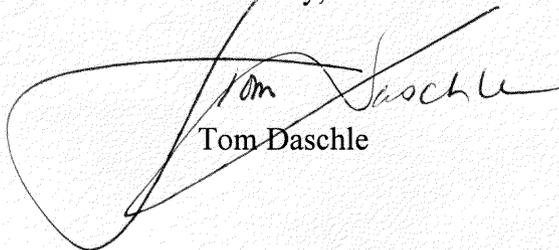
I appreciate your response to my latest counteroffer on asbestos, and your acknowledgment of the significant compromises Democrats have made. Clearly, serious efforts have been made for over a year, and both sides have consistently illustrated a strong commitment to developing a bipartisan solution to the asbestos crisis.

While I agree that the issues of pending cases and startup are important, as I have noted all along, I think the best path to securing a solution is to resolve a comprehensive set of issues that are interrelated. This past June, I presented a moderate proposal that reflected the discussions over the previous year and offered solutions on a variety of issues. After your response, I presented you with a new comprehensive proposal that accepted your overall funding level, and moved again toward your position on a number of issues.

Given the lateness of the legislative year, the only way to secure a solution is for both sides to demonstrate a willingness to give and take. My proposals have continued to reflect discussions and concerns raised by all stakeholders and have provided a balanced approach to the opposing positions. Having said that, I am open to working with you to develop alternatives. While I understand the concerns you raised in your letter, in order to move the process forward, it would be helpful if you could outline how you would resolve the remaining differences and address some of the concerns I have raised in a manner that reflects genuine compromise. I remain committed to developing a bipartisan solution and would be willing to engage in discussions at any time.

I appreciate your continued willingness to work with me to try to solve the asbestos crisis.

Sincerely,



Tom Daschle