



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairman Donald P. Wagner, Third District
FROM: Vicente Sarmiento, Supervisor Second District
DATE: March 21, 2024
Subject: **Presentation Item for June 25th, 2024, Board of Supervisors Meeting**

Supervisor Sarmiento request a presentation be added to the agenda for the June 25th, 2024, Board of Supervisors meeting. The title should read:

Supervisor Sarmiento will be presenting a proclamation recognizing the month of June as “Silicosis Awareness Month,” to increase education and awareness in the community of Silicosis Lung Disease.

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2024 MAY 23 AM 9:21
CLERK OF THE BOARD
COUNTY OF ORANGE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Draft Silicosis Resolution/Proclamation- declaring June Silicosis Awareness Month

WHEREAS, silicosis, a progressive, severe lung disease caused by the inhaling of silica dust particles is an important and preventable occupational lung disease in the United States and worldwide, and in recent years has been noted to affect individuals who fabricate countertops; and

WHEREAS, over 132 silicosis cases were identified in California since 2019 amongst engineered stone fabrication workers, with 82 from Los Angeles County, and 33 identified from other counties of Southern California, and at least 13 fatalities; and

WHEREAS, silicosis lung disease has been considered to have long latency (greater than 20 years), and in the case of engineered stone workers can occur with much shorter latency (less than 10 years) and can contribute and progress to lung transplant or death in younger workers; and

WHEREAS, inhalation of silica dust can also worsen preexisting cardiovascular disease, pulmonary tuberculosis, chronic obstructive disease, cancer, autoimmune disease, and kidney disorders; and

WHEREAS, most identified cases in California are young Latino immigrant men in their 30's and 40's; and

WHEREAS, many workers in the field of stone fabrication are unaware of the health dangers of silica exposure; and

WHEREAS, medical provider awareness of the disease is low, with symptomatic individuals potentially receiving delayed diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, primary prevention to control respirable crystalline silica dust remains the most important way to address silicosis; and

WHEREAS, education and awareness campaigns are needed to increase awareness, reduce exposures, and improve early disease detection and secondary prevention in the community;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Orange County Board of Supervisors does hereby declare the month of June as Silicosis Awareness Month to increase education and awareness in the community. We urge Orange County to be more aware of the dangers of silica exposure, safety measures that can be taken, screening that should be performed for those who are exposed and linkage to care for those who have had exposure and who have symptoms.