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## Guest Commentary

# Texas tort system learns lessons from asbestos

Houston Business Journal - by Joseph Nixon

Date: Thursday, November 4, 2010, 12:16pm CDT

After 40 years, 730,000 national asbestos claimants, more than \$50 billion in claims paid, the bankruptcy of 73 companies and the loss of more than 100,000 jobs, we have learned quite a few lessons regarding mass tort dockets in Texas.

First, some people really have been damaged by asbestos and are suffering greatly. Exposure to asbestos can, in a small percentage of cases, cause mesothelioma, a deadly form of lung cancer. Once diagnosed, death is certain within two years. These plaintiffs deserve full compensation and a speedy trial.

Second, big money leads to large numbers of phony claimants. Because of ...

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Joseph Nixon is a senior fellow with the Texas Public Policy Foundation and of counsel with Houston law firm Beirne Maynard & Parsons LLP. He served six terms in the Texas House of Representatives and chaired the House Committee on Civil Practices during his last two terms.

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