

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

S. 620

To amend title 9, United States Code, with respect to arbitration.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 28, 2019

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. MARKEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

# A BILL

To amend title 9, United States Code, with respect to arbitration.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

### 3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4        This Act may be cited as the “Safety Over Arbitra-  
5        tion Act of 2019”.

## 6 SEC. 2. ARBITRATION OF DISPUTES INVOLVING HAZARDS

## **TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title 9, United States Code, is  
9 amended by adding at the end the following:

1     **“CHAPTER 4—ARBITRATION OF DISPUTES**  
2       **INVOLVING    HAZARDS    TO    PUBLIC**  
3       **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

“Sec.

“401. Definition.

“402. Election of arbitration.

4     **“§ 401. Definition**

5       “In this chapter, the term ‘hazard to public health  
6   or safety’ means an activity, substance, or condition that  
7   has a potential to cause harm to the health or safety of  
8   the public.

9     **“§ 402. Election of arbitration**

10       “(a) CONSENT REQUIRED.—Notwithstanding any  
11   other provision of law, whenever a contract between an  
12   individual and another party requires the use of arbitra-  
13   tion to resolve a claim or controversy alleging facts rel-  
14   evant to a hazard to public health or safety, arbitration  
15   may be used to resolve the claim or controversy only if,  
16   after the claim or controversy arises, all parties to the  
17   claim or controversy consent in writing to use arbitration.

18       “(b) EXPLANATION REQUIRED.—Notwithstanding  
19   any other provision of law, whenever arbitration is elected  
20   to resolve a claim or controversy pursuant to subsection  
21   (a), the arbitrator shall provide the parties to the contract  
22   with a written explanation of the factual and legal basis  
23   for any award or other outcome, which shall not be made  
24   under seal by the arbitrator or a court.

1       “(c) APPLICATION.—This section shall apply to any  
2 contract entered into after the date of enactment of this  
3 chapter.”.

4       (b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—  
5 The table of chapters for title 9, United States Code, is  
6 amended by adding at the end the following:

**“4. Arbitration of disputes involving hazards to public  
health and safety ..... 401”.**

