
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 966 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY MURT, BOBACK, D. COSTA, DRISCOLL, GIBBONS,
GODSHALL, HELM, HENNESSEY, KIRKLAND, LONGIETTI, MARSHALL,
MILLARD, NEILSON, QUIGLEY, RAPP, READSHAW, ROZZI, SAINATO,
VEREB, WATSON AND MATZIE, AUGUST 16, 2016

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, AUGUST 16, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Pennsylvania delegation to the 114th Congress of the
2 United States to support the passage of the Toxic Exposure
3 Research Act of 2015.

4 WHEREAS, The Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015, introduced
5 as H.R. 1769, establishes a national center for research on the
6 diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants
7 of veterans exposed to toxic substances during their service
8 within the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and
9 creates an advisory board to oversee and assess the work of the
10 center; and

11 WHEREAS, Over the years, millions have served our great
12 nation in the United States Armed Forces and during their
13 service many have been exposed to toxins such as Agent Orange
14 and other chemical defoliants and military herbicides with
15 unknown consequences; and

16 WHEREAS, Most of these veterans did not know they were
17 exposed to harmful materials and many of these veterans suffered

1 from the harmful effects of these toxins; and

2 WHEREAS, Many children and grandchildren of veterans were
3 born with both structural and nonstructural defects and some
4 have been accepted into treatment programs by the United States
5 Department of Veterans Affairs as a result of exposure to toxins
6 from a parent's military service; and

7 WHEREAS, Veterans and their families have suffered and
8 deserve some sort of compensation; and

9 WHEREAS, Birth anomalies in the children of veterans are not
10 tracked, mostly going unexplained and unreported; and

11 WHEREAS, While these anomalies have some similarities, more
12 research is needed on their causes; and

13 WHEREAS, Most states that have birth registries do not report
14 to a national registry and even infant deaths and birth defects
15 at military hospitals relating to the children of veterans are
16 not put into a Federal registry; and

17 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Veterans Affairs and
18 the United States Department of Defense have been tracking toxic
19 exposures and possible toxic exposures without follow-up
20 research on the veterans and their offspring; and

21 WHEREAS, The Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 would
22 require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of
23 Defense to share data regarding toxic exposures; and

24 WHEREAS, Parents of children with birth defects carry a heavy
25 emotional and financial burden; and

26 WHEREAS, Veterans exposed to Agent Orange and its dioxin
27 contaminants have reported a variety of serious health problems
28 and symptoms, including cancers and birth defects in their
29 children; and

30 WHEREAS, Evidence from the Institute of Medicine shows

1 bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, Parkinson's-like symptoms and
2 hypertension are among the growing list of ailments presumed to
3 come from exposure to toxins from war; and

4 WHEREAS, By instituting the new listed ailments and
5 researching further to discover new ailments, veterans and their
6 families will see faster compensation claims and retroactive
7 benefits relieving a great deal of the financial burden; and

8 WHEREAS, The number of Vietnam veterans who have children and
9 grandchildren with birth defects related to exposure to Agent
10 Orange are significant and the planned research seeks to provide
11 diagnosis, treatment and care and focus on dependents; and

12 WHEREAS, In addition to creating a national center for
13 research, the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 creates a
14 database of birth defects and anomalies, both structural and
15 nonstructural; and

16 WHEREAS, The Federal legislation is supported by the Vietnam
17 Veterans of America; and

18 WHEREAS, The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of
19 Pennsylvania should support this legislative effort due to the
20 courage and valor shown by the Vietnam veterans during their
21 service; and

22 WHEREAS, Veterans and their families should no longer be
23 denied benefits or be forced to plead for benefits, which they
24 have earned and are entitled to receive; and

25 WHEREAS, The Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 is not only
26 focused on research of Agent Orange and other chemicals used in
27 South Vietnam, but also exposures to chemical agents for all
28 veterans who served in our armed forces, including those exposed
29 to toxic fumes released by the United States Demolition
30 Operations at the Khamisiyah Pit and those exposed to toxic

1 fires from burn pits across Iraq and Afghanistan during
2 operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and
3 Operation New Dawn; therefore be it

4 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
5 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Pennsylvania delegation to
6 the 114th Congress of the United States to support the passage
7 of the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015, H.R. 1769; and be it
8 further

9 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
10 the President of the United States, the United States Department
11 of Defense, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and
12 to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
14 John Rowan, President, Vietnam Veterans of America; Thomas
15 Haberkorn, President, Vietnam Veterans of America Pennsylvania
16 State Council; and Dennis Haas, President, Pennsylvania War
17 Veterans Council.