

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 527 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY BARRAR, BISHOP, BOBACK, R. BROWN, D. COSTA,
DRISCOLL, FEE, GILLEN, GOODMAN, A. HARRIS, IRVIN, JOZWIAK,
LONGIETTI, MARSHALL, McNEILL, MILLARD, MURT, NEILSON, RAPP,
ROZZI, SAYLOR AND WATSON, OCTOBER 5, 2015

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, OCTOBER 5, 2015

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 with unknown
14 consequences; and

15 WHEREAS, Most of these veterans did not know they were
16 exposed to harmful materials and many of these veterans suffered
17 from the harmful effects of these toxins; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 WHEREAS, In addition to creating a national center for
2 research, the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 creates a
3 database of birth defects and anomalies, both structural and
4 nonstructural; and

5 WHEREAS, The Federal legislation is supported by the Vietnam
6 Veterans of America; and

7 WHEREAS, The Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 is not only
8 focused on research of Agent Orange and other chemicals used in
9 South Vietnam, but also exposures to chemical agents for all
10 veterans who served in our armed forces, including those exposed
11 to toxic fumes released by the United States Demolition
12 Operations at the Khamisiyah Pit and those exposed to toxic
13 fires from burn pits across Iraq and Afghanistan during
14 operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and
15 Operation New Dawn; therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
17 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Pennsylvania delegation to
18 the 114th Congress of the United States to support the passage
19 of the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015, H.R. 1769; and be it
20 further

21 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
22 the President of the United States, the United States Department
23 of Defense, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and
24 to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
26 John Rowan, President, Vietnam Veterans of America; Thomas
27 Haberkorn, President, Vietnam Veterans of America Pennsylvania
28 State Council; and Dennis Haas, President, Pennsylvania War
29 Veterans Council.