



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact:
Mokie Porter
301-996-0901

Rep. Mike Honda Introduces H.R. 4816: Toxic Exposure Research and Military Family Support Act of 2014

(Washington, DC)— “We applaud Rep. Mike Honda (D-CA17) and his colleagues in the House of Representatives for introducing H.R. 4816, the Toxic Exposure Research and Military Family Support Act of 2014,” said VVA National President John Rowan. “Among the so-called invisible wounds of war are those brought home by troops that may not manifest for a decade, or more. And most tragically, they may pass on genetically to the children and grandchildren of our nation’s warriors. Our children are the innocent victims of our military service.”

This bill, like S.1602, introduced by Sen. Blumenthal (D-CT), instructs the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish a national center for the diagnosis, treatment, and research of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxins during service in the Armed Forces and to provide certain services to those descendants. Toxins, such as Agent Orange, have been shown to cause birth defects in the children of military personnel who came into contact with them, either during the Vietnam War, in the storage and transportation of them, or by riding in aircraft that had been previously used to transport the toxins. H.R. 4816 would also require the Department of Veterans Affairs to coordinate with the National Birth Defects Registry and create a central research facility dedicated to studying and chronicling the incidence of birth defects caused by toxins like Agent Orange.

H.R. 4816 has been referred to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs and Armed Services.

We thank our fellow veterans of the American Legion and AMVETS for standing with us in support of this critical bill, as well as the following H.R. 4816 cosponsors: Rep. Conyers (D-MI13), Rep. Grijalva (D-AZ3), Rep. Napolitano (D-CA32), Rep. Higgins (D-NY26), Rep. Bordallo (D-GUAM), Rep. Keating (D-MA9), Rep. Kirkpatrick (D-AZ1), Rep. Lee (D-CA13), and Rep. Welch (D-VT At-Large).

Vietnam Veterans of America (www.vva.org) is the nation's only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated to the needs of Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA's founding principle is “Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.”

