

JULY 2020 TOXIC EXPOSURE COMMITTEE REPORT

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Well, as you can imagine, the COVID-19 virus has changed the course for our committee drastically. There were many Faces of Agent Orange Town Hall meetings scheduled, and most all of them had to be canceled, due to the social-distancing measures that prevent us from meeting in large groups. We are discussing workarounds and exploring how we might proceed, considering the new health-safety protocols.

The VA has fallen behind on the implementation of the children's bill, PL114-315, which was signed into law in December 2016. The advisory panel has yet to be appointed, and the research our children need is lagging. It is time for the VA to act on the tenets of the law. We understand the situation with the virus; however, VA Secretary Wilke's pattern of delay predates the pandemic. It is time for action.

There are four presumptive that the VA is just sitting on. A Senate bill, S-3444, *Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act 2020*, addresses Parkinsonism, bladder cancer, hypertension, and hypothyroidism for veterans exposed to certain herbicide agents while serving in Vietnam, and we ask that each of you individually speak with your senators to sign on this bill.

Blue Water Navy Update - Law Passed:

A Blue Water Navy veteran is a veteran who served "offshore," defined as "not more than 123 nautical miles seaward of a line commencing on the southwestern demarcation line of the water of Vietnam and Cambodia and intersecting" grid points.

If a veteran or survivor filed the claim, they must have served between the years January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, they are entitled to presumption of Agent Orange exposure. Please contact your accredited service officer. There are two forms with different numbers that need to be filed.