

**REVENUE:** No revenue impact

**FISCAL:** Fiscal impact issued

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<b>Action:</b>	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed
<b>Vote:</b>	4 - 0 - 1
<b>Yeas:</b>	Boquist, Cowan, Schaufler, Barker
<b>Nays:</b>	0
<b>Exc.:</b>	Scott
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Jim Keller, Administrator
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	4/17, 4/24

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Directs the Director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs to assist veterans of military service in obtaining screening tests and treatment for exposure to depleted uranium. Creates a Task Force on Exposure to Depleted Uranium. Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Increase of illness after 1991 Gulf War
- Impact of bombing and oil field fires unknown from the 1991 Gulf War
- Exposure to depleted uranium during normal handling

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** Allows the Adjutant General to appoint a designee. Appoints the Director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs as the chair of the task force. Adds area of study of medical literature concerning links between exposure to depleted uranium and the Gulf War syndrome and sets forth a time frame for task force appointments.

**BACKGROUND:** Depleted uranium (DU) is natural uranium left over after most of the U-235 isotope has been removed, such as that used as fuel in nuclear power plants. DU possesses about 60 percent of the radioactivity of natural uranium and is a radiation hazard primarily if internalized, such as in shrapnel, contaminated wounds, and inhalation. Testing of DU for possible military use began in the early 1960's and it was first used by the United States military in projectiles and armor for tanks during the Gulf War, which began in the 1990's. It has also been used in other conflicts such as Operation Iraqi Freedom and Bosnia.

House Bill 2832 requires the Director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish an outreach program to inform veterans of military service of the availability of assistance for screening tests and federal treatment services for exposure to depleted uranium. The measure also creates a Task Force on Exposure to Depleted Uranium, which would submit a report to the interim legislative committee assigned to deal with veterans' affairs no later than Oct 1, 2008. The measure sunsets in January 2009.