

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	7 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Boone, Esquivel, Fagan, Huffman, Parrish, Witt, Matthews
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Elizabeth Edwards, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	3/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Honors service and dedication of nearly 200,000 United States military service members exposed to unsafe levels of radiation from nuclear weapons testing between 1945 and 1962.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Medical conditions resulting from exposure to radiation during military service
- Impacts on exposed veterans' children
- Effect of secrecy oath on ability to make medical claim
- Raising awareness of atomic veterans
- Similar impact of herbicides on Vietnam War veterans

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Nearly 200,000 United States military service members were exposed to unsafe levels of radiation due to government sponsored nuclear weapons testing between 1945 and 1962. These service members are now known as atomic veterans. More than 20 cancers and diseases are associated with the radiation exposure experienced by atomic veterans. Many of these veterans were exposed without their knowledge or consent and many died before they were able to seek any benefits. Until the repeal of the Nuclear Radiation and Secrecy Agreement in 1996, atomic veterans were prohibited from discussing their military involvement in nuclear testing, thereby limiting their ability to obtain medical treatment for related issues. House Concurrent Resolution 23 recognizes the honorable service and self-sacrifice of atomic veterans.