

Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly - 2015 Regular Session
STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

MEASURE: HJM 9
CARRIER: Rep. Parrish

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact
Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 03/31/15
Action: Be Adopted.
Meeting Dates: 03/24, 03/31

Vote:
Yeas: 7 - Boone, Esquivel, Evans, Huffman, Lively, Parrish, Piluso

Prepared By: Bryan Guiney, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Urges Congress to recognize presumption of service connection for Vietnam War veterans exposed to Agent Orange while serving at sea or in the airspace above Vietnam.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Active legislation in Congress (HR 969)

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Agent Orange Act of 1991 (P.L. 102-4) amends Title 38 of United States Code to recognize the service connection for certain diseases among military personnel who served in the Republic of South Vietnam between 1962 and 1975. This has provided access to appropriate disability compensation and medical care for Vietnam War veterans who furnish written documentation that they stepped foot on the land of Vietnam or served on its inland waterways.

Agent Orange has been verified, through various studies and reports, as a wide-spreading chemical that was able to reach Navy ships in Vietnam's territorial waters through the air and waterborne distribution routes. Warships positioned off the shores of Vietnam routinely distilled seawater to obtain potable water and a 2002 Australian study found that the distillation process, rather than removing toxins, in fact concentrated the dioxin in water used for drinking, cooking and washing. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention studied specific cancers among Vietnam War veterans, and found a higher risk of cancer among veterans from the United States Navy.

House Joint Memorial 9 requests that the Congress of the United States of America recognize the presumption of a service connection for Agent Orange exposure for United States veterans who served in the waters and airspace defined by the combat zone in Vietnam.