



March 19, 2021

The Honorable Thom Tillis
United States Senate
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Tillis:

On behalf of the men and women of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and its Auxiliary, I am proud to offer our support for the *Toxic Exposure in the American Military (TEAM) Act*. This legislation would provide critical reforms and guidance necessary for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to effectively grant care and benefits to veterans suffering from conditions related to toxic exposures.

During the last century, veterans returned home from war with an array of unexplained health conditions and illnesses associated with the toxic exposures and environmental hazards they encountered in service. Today is no different, and toxic exposure has become synonymous with military service.

In alignment with the VFW's priorities, this legislation would: establish an independent commission to review toxic and environmental exposures incident to military service and recommend independent studies; require VA to enter into an agreement with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct studies on possible associations between diseases and toxic exposures; and require VA to respond to those scientific findings with sufficient, limited, or suggestive evidence of an association and grant presumptive service connection when warranted. The VFW believes that the comprehensive approach provided in this legislation would enable addressing past, present, and future toxic exposures in the military at locations both domestic and abroad.

The VFW looks forward to working with you and your staff to ensure the passage of this important legislation. Thank you for your continued support of America's veterans.

Sincerely,

Patrick Murray, Director
VFW National Legislative Service

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