



BURN PITS 360 VETERANS ORGANIZATION
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To:

From:

Date:

Subject: Support the Family Member Access to Burn Pit Registry Act of 2019 (H.R. 1001) and the Burn Pits Veterans Revision Act of 2019 (H.R. 1005)

Dear Representative _____,

My name is _____. I am a (*veteran, family member, other*) who resides in your district. I am writing you to urge your office to support two measures that would help U.S. Military veterans who have been negatively affected by exposure to toxic burn pits. Specifically, Congressman Joaquin Castro introduced the Family Member Access to Burn Pits Registry Act of 2019 ([H.R.1001](#)) and the Burn Pits Veterans Revision Act of 2019 ([H.R. 1005](#)).

Given the broad exposure to burn pits during service, we must allow immediate family members to participate in the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pits Registry on behalf of a deceased veteran or service member—something that is currently prohibited under law. Currently, 150,000 veterans and service members use this registry to document their health issues—including lung diseases and various cancers—which they believe originate from their exposure to these burn pits' fumes. The [Family Member Access to Burn Pits Registry Act of 2019](#) would:

- Require the VA to allow family members to participate in this registry on behalf of a deceased veteran or servicemember
- Enable family members to document the experience of their loved ones; and
- Help the government analyze long-term health effects of burn pit exposure.

We also know that the VA lacks a diagnostic code for obliterative bronchitis (OB) and in some cases has analogized the disease with asthma, which is not fully reflective of the functional impairments caused by OB. As a result, some veterans have received a rating that does not properly compensate them for their functional impairments when they are entitled to a much higher rating. The [Burn Pit Veterans Revision Act of 2019](#) seeks to address this issue by directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to amend the schedule for rating disabilities to add a specific diagnostic code and evaluation criteria for OB.

Specifically, this legislation would:

- Require that no later than 180 days after the date of enactment the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall amend the schedule of rating disabilities to add a diagnostic code and evaluation criteria for obliterative bronchiolitis; and
- Provide a process by which a veteran currently receiving service connected compensation for an environmental (burn pit) exposure related disability may be reevaluated and assigned a new disability rating with no reduction to the veterans' current disability rating.

Thousands of our service members have come back from Iraq and Afghanistan and have experienced a constellation of debilitating, chronic ailments. Many of them served around open air burn pits where thousands of pounds of trash burned daily. Much of this trash was known to be toxic such as: plastics, batteries, paints and solvents, and much more. Despite the connection between our service members illnesses and the burn pits, they are being denied healthcare, disability claims and death benefits at an extraordinarily high rate.

It is imperative that Congress moves to solve this problem so that service members, veterans, and their family members get the support they need and are entitled to. Supporting this legislation is a first step towards making sure that happens. Let's end the policy of "delay, deny, wait till they die."

Sincerely,

Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip code
