

**NINETY-NINTH NATIONAL CONVENTION  
OF  
THE AMERICAN LEGION  
Reno, Nevada  
August 22, 23, 24, 2017**

**Resolution No. 41: Radiation-Exposed Veterans**

**Origin: Washington**

**Submitted by: Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation**

WHEREAS, Servicemembers who cleaned up various nuclear testing sites, including the Marshall Islands, during the 1970s and 1980s and received a significant radiation exposure from their duties deserve the same benefits that U.S. law guarantees to other servicemembers who were exposed to dangerous radiation and nuclear waste; and

WHEREAS, The servicemembers who participated in cleaning up these nuclear testing sites suffer from high rates of cancers due to their exposure to radiation and nuclear waste, but are currently unable to receive the same treatments and service-related disability presumptions that other “radiation-exposed veterans” receive from the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs should be responsible for the care of these atomic cleanup veterans; and

WHEREAS, The Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act was introduced in February 2017 to designate veterans who participated in the cleanup of these various nuclear testing sites as “radiation-exposed veterans,” and make them eligible to receive the same health-care benefits given to other servicemembers who were involved in active nuclear tests; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion believes the Department of Veterans Affairs should acknowledge the high levels of radiation and nuclear waste exposure of these atomic cleanup veterans as service connected and should be responsible for their care and treatment; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Reno, Nevada, August 22, 23, 24, 2017, That The American Legion urge the president of the United States and the U.S. Congress to designate these atomic cleanup veterans as “radiation-exposed veterans” and ensure that they are eligible for the same health care and other benefits as other servicemembers who were involved in active nuclear tests; and, be it finally**

**RESOLVED, That The American Legion continues to exert maximum effort to ensure that these atomic cleanup veterans receive the proper and necessary care, treatment, and benefits that they deserve and have earned.**