

**ONE HUNDRED AND FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
Indianapolis, Indiana
August 27, 28, 29, 2019**

Resolution No. 11: Environmental Exposures At Fort McClellan

Origin: Kansas

Submitted by: Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

WHEREAS, Fort McClellan, Alabama has been acknowledged to be a former United States military installation and home to several contractor presences in the areas or disciplines of chemical warfare and battlefield chemical use, to include herbicides and deforestation chemicals; and

WHEREAS, Numerous reports and studies by both independent and governmental agencies delineate a high concentration of chemicals similar or identical to those found in herbicides already known to cause significant illness, injury and damage to personnel working in close proximity to them, such as PCBs; and

WHEREAS, The following excerpt from the January 1998 US Army Environmental Center Final Environmental Baseline Study clearly states the presence of environmental contaminants in a dangerous concentration to occupants in its executive summary, located on page ES-1:"The BRAC environmental restoration program requires investigation and cleanup as necessary of federal properties prior to transfer to the public domain. The BRAC environmental restoration program is similar to the Army's Installation Restoration Program (IRP), except that it has been expanded to include environmental issues such as asbestos, lead-based paint, radon, radiological hazards, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), unexploded ordnance (UXO), chemical warfare materiel (CWM), and other environmental concerns not typically addressed by the IRP."; and

WHEREAS, The potential pool of connected victims of exposure to toxic chemicals and radioactive materials is known to number in excess of 700,000 servicemembers, spouses, dependent children and associated support staff; and

WHEREAS, A House resolution has been introduced in all but 2 of the last 6 years directing the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to create a registry of sufferers for the purpose of identification and service; and

WHEREAS, It has been noted that congressional actions regarding Fort McClellan move from the committee in which they are introduced to the Subcommittee on Health with ever-increasing rapidity and stall there; and

WHEREAS, The vast majority of claimants having served at Fort McClellan seeking VA service connection for themselves, their co-located-dependents and immediate descendants have been repeatedly denied connection of the same disabilities inherent with PCB-based chemicals, such as Monsanto's Agent Orange, one of the chemical herbicides stored and tested there; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, August 27, 28, 29, 2019, That The American Legion urges Congress to support and foster legislation to grant and ensure service connection and compensation for feasible claims, to include spouses and child dependents, who were exposed at Fort McClellan between dates established that concentrations of dangerous chemicals and radiological materials were present; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges Congress to direct that a list of presumptive conditions similar to the list existing for Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam veterans be created and maintained for the purposes of expeditious handling of claimants' filings; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion desires this resolution to be applied to the reiteration list, as adopted, until a final congressional determination be made, and listed for retention on addendum for the pertinent congressional committee(s).