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National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission
1608 K Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006
K. Robert Lewis, Chairman - Connecticut
Peter S. Gaytan, Director - Maryland

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The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proposes to add AL Amyloidosis to the Agent Orange/herbicide presumptive list

On November 3, 2008, VA published a proposed rule in the Federal Register to establish AL amyloidosis as an Agent Orange/herbicide presumptive disability. The intended effect of this proposed rule is to establish presumptive service connection for AL amyloidosis based on herbicide exposure. Comments on this proposed regulation must be received by VA on or before January 2, 2009.

In the Institute of Medicine (IOM) report "Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 2006," released on July 27, 2007, IOM concluded that "there is limited or suggestive evidence of an association between exposures to the compounds of interest [found in the herbicide Agent Orange] and AL amyloidosis." The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, after considering all of the evidence, subsequently determined that there is a positive association between exposure to herbicide agents and the occurrence of AL amyloidosis.

AL amyloidosis is a rare monoclonal plasma cell disorder that shares biological and pathophysiological features of multiple myeloma and some lymphomas that have been associated with herbicide exposure in previous IOM reports. Although there is relatively little direct epidemiological evidence concerning the relation of AL amyloidosis to herbicide exposure, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs noted that

IOM considered the evidence linking AL amyloidosis to multiple myelomas and lymphomas to be significant, if indirect, evidence of an association.

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