



90,000 Navy and Coast Guard Veterans denied benefits

Blue Water Navy and Coast Guard veterans did not spend time on shore in the Viet Nam combat zone, never the less they are suffering due to their exposure to toxic agents while underway during the Vietnam Conflict

(WAR) 1962 - 1975



- in June 2018 congress unanimously passed H.R. 299 **restoring** VA disability benefits to 90,000 Blue Water Navy veterans who had their disability eligibility taken away in 2002 after regulatory changes. The bill moved to the Senate for action. At the end of the 2018 session; 2 Senators KILLED H.R. 299, *The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act*.
- The bill stalled in the Senate when two Republican senators, Mike Enzi (R Wyoming) and Mike Lee, **blocked a motion** for unanimous consent. According to Enzi “On this bill, many of us have been made aware of the potential cost growth and the budgetary and operational pressures that would happen at the VA. Senator Lees’ insistence to wait for more sufficient evidence Supporting evidence has existed for more than 20 years.”
- The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated the expense for restoring these benefits would increase direct spending by only \$1.2 billion over a 9-year period 2019-2028 plus expanded access to other certain veterans who were exposed, and their dependents would cost \$294 million over the same period.

These Vietnam, Korean DMZ, and Thailand veterans are suffering from health conditions related to exposure to **Agent Orange**. The bill would also help veterans and their families suffering from these conditions while serving during the Korean conflict when various defoliants were tested. Benefits would also have been expanded to include children born with spina bifida due to a parent’s exposure in Thailand. Further the bill included information pertaining to disabilities incurred by veterans serving in the middle east from exposure to “burn pits”.

- **A letter was sent to President Trump** by the leaders of the Military Officers Association of America - MOAA, The Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, The American Legion, Paralyzed Veterans of America, AMVETS, and Vietnam Veterans of America when the legislation stalled last year. **Despite this plea for leadership he took no action to get the Senate to move before the 2018 session ended. DENYING Veterans, the Benefits they have earned**

UPDATE: Hours into the current legislative session, ranking member on Veterans Affairs Rep. Phil Roe, R-Tenn., introduced legislation to ensure that our Vietnam Veterans receive the benefits they deserve.

This bill, similar to the bill denied by the 2018 Senate now carries the name of the new chairman Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif and has more than 257 Bi Partisan co-sponsors.

- **January, 29 - UPDATE:** A federal appeals court in Washington sided with thousands the veterans who were stationed offshore during the war and developed health problems linked to exposure to the toxic herbicide Agent Orange. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled overwhelmingly for these veterans, finding they are eligible for the same disability benefits as those who put boots on the ground or patrolled Vietnam's inland rivers. The court majority said Congress clearly intended to extend benefits to veterans stationed in the territorial seas known as "blue water" Navy and Coast Guard veterans.
- "We find no merit in the government's arguments to the contrary," Judge Kimberly A. Moore wrote for the majority., Judge Raymond T. Chen wrote that legislation is needed to back up the court's action.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Although the Court ruled in favor of The Veterans, funding must be allocated by congress. Plus, this ruling may be appealed by the Federal Government.

Support is needed for this bill to pass through the House and Senate as a "clean Bill", providing the needed funding. Please support this bill, call your Congressman or Congresswoman TODAY and tell them our veterans need their support on this bill.

"The Blue Water Navy Viet Nam Veterans Act of 2019"

Call Congressman Daniel Webster District 11 which includes The Villages.

You may reach Congressman Daniel Webster at: 202-225-1002, or 352-241-9220 or 352-383-3552.

Call TODAY, tell them our veterans need his support on this bill.