

2015-K363

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION urging the New York State Congressional delegation to support the passage of the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 (H.R. 1769/S.901)

WHEREAS, The federal legislation, the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 would establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during their service; an advisory board will be established to oversee and assess the work of the center, to determine health conditions in a veteran's offspring that likely result from the veteran's exposure and evaluate cases of exposure; and

WHEREAS, Over the years millions have served our great nation in the United States Armed Forces; during their service many have been exposed to toxins with unknown consequences; most of these veterans did not know they were exposed to harmful materials, with many of these veterans suffering from the harmful effects of these toxins; and

WHEREAS, Many children and grandchildren of these veterans were born with both structural and nonstructural defects; some have been accepted by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as a result of the exposures from their parent's military service; and

WHEREAS, Birth anomalies in the children of veterans are not tracked as normal birth defects, so most go unreported, unexplained, and not researched; these anomalies have some similarities but follow mostly unreported and under researched paths; and

WHEREAS, Most states that have birth registries do not report to a national registry; miscarriages and still births are seldom researched for cause, these are not tracked on a national registry; even deaths and defects at military hospitals relating to the children of dependents are

not tracked or not put into a federal registry; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense have been tracking toxic exposures and possible exposures without follow-up research on the veterans and their offspring; this federal legislation, known as the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 would require the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Administration to share data regarding toxic exposures; and

WHEREAS, Parents of children with birth defects carry a heavy emotional and financial burden; veterans exposed to Agent Orange and its dioxin contaminants have reported a variety of serious health problems and symptoms; these include cancers, and birth defects in their children; the number of Vietnam veterans who have children and grandchildren with birth defects related to exposure to Agent Orange are significant; the research will provide diagnosis, treatment, and care and focus on dependents; and

WHEREAS, Under this federal legislation, known as the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015, would create a center of excellence to test, study, and find solutions to the illnesses and anomalies affecting the children of veterans from all eras and duty stations; this center would be created within the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and monitored by advisory and congressional committees to ensure transparency; and

WHEREAS, The Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 would also create a database of birth defects and anomalies both structural and nonstructural; and

WHEREAS, This federal legislation is supported by the Vietnam Veterans of America; and

WHEREAS, The Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 is not only about the herbicide of Agent Orange and other chemicals used in South Vietnam, but about exposures to chemical agents for all who served in our military

forces, including those exposed to toxic fumes released by the United States Demolition Operations at the Khamisiyah Pit and those exposed to all toxic fires from burn pits across Iraq and Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the New York State Congressional delegation be and hereby is respectfully memorialized by this Legislative Body to support the passage of the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 (H.R. 1769/S.901); and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to each member of the Congressional delegation from the State of New York; John Rowan, President, Vietnam Veterans of America and Ned D. Foote, President, Vietnam Veterans of America New York State Council.