

SR73, As Adopted by Senate, October 18, 2017

Senate Resolution No. 73 as amended October 18, 2017

Senators Hopgood, Bieda, Gregory, Conyers, Warren, Young, Hertel, Schmidt, Johnson and Ananich offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 73.

A resolution to memorialize the United States Congress to do all it can to support atomic veterans, their spouses, and dependents in receiving medical care and disability compensation.

Whereas, Throughout the nation's history, brave Michigan citizens have answered the call of duty and service, defending our freedom as members of the United States Armed Forces; and

Whereas, As a result of the Manhattan Project, the United States conducted the Trinity Atomic Test, the first detonation of a nuclear device, in New Mexico on July 16, 1945; and

Whereas, Over 200,000 American service members, including those from Michigan, participated in aboveground nuclear tests between 1945 and 1962, <<and veterans who participated in the cleanup of the Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands between 1977 and 1980,>> and also those who were part of the United States military occupation forces in or around Hiroshima and Nagasaki before 1946, and some were held as a prisoner of war during this time; and

Whereas, These atomic veterans were exposed to radiation during their military service and, due to that exposure, developed several types of medical conditions that are not currently listed under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA); and

Whereas, Many atomic veterans were prevented by secrecy laws or oaths from seeking medical care or disability compensation from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for conditions they may have developed as a result of radiation exposure; and

Whereas, In 1996, the United States Congress repealed the Nuclear Radiation and Secrecy Agreements Act, freeing atomic veterans to describe their military involvement in nuclear testing in order to file for VA benefits; and

Whereas, Atomic veterans will now be eligible for free medical care from the VA and compensation in the form of full service-connected disability allowance, including payments to a surviving spouse or children; and

Whereas, The Michigan Veteran's Affairs Agency will provide free assistance to Michigan veterans and their dependents in developing and submitting disability compensation claims to the VA and the Department of Justice for death benefits; and

Whereas, The National Association of Atomic Veterans was formed in 1979 to help atomic veterans obtain medical care and assistance; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That the members of this legislative body find it proper and fitting that atomic veterans be recognized for their service and sacrifice for our nation and that they should be provided the necessary medical services and compensation for their service; and be it further

Resolved, That we memorialize the United States Congress to do all it can to support atomic veterans, their spouses, and dependents in receiving medical care and disability compensation; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the National Associations of Atomic Veterans, the Michigan Veteran's Affairs Agency, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.