

UVC Federal Legislation Watch Update

12 September 2021

Top of the Federal Agenda is **HR 4350**, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022. The report by the House Committee on Armed Services was completed last Friday 10 September 2021. As per the Committee's summary the NDAA purposes \$744 billion in discretionary spending. "This authorization makes significant quality of life improvements for service members and their families while also making historic investments to research, develop, and acquired advanced technologies while making a tangible and positive effect on military readiness."

The NDAA addresses the importance of the Afghan Special Immigrant Visas (SIV) program which honors our commitments to those Afghans that supported the US mission in Afghanistan.

The NDAA will reform the UCMJ with recommendation of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military by removing the Commander from the decisions related to the prosecution of special victim crimes. This is to be done by creating an Office of the Special Victim Prosecutor within each service.

For those who are interested a link to the Committee's full summary is listed below:

https://armedservices.house.gov/_cache/files/1/3/13abf96a-7f26-48f0-8c54-c6b6d11e2715/0E2DB3E3B22B70F6BDAB86B4D728A433.20210830-fy22-ndaa-full-committee-summary-final.pdf

Even though Congress was in recess during the month of August the House of Representatives were busy due to events in Afghanistan. I found over a dozen bills submitted between 20 August 2021 and 31 August 2021 in reaction to the surrender and fall of Kabul. Some these are listed below:

HR 5068, Prioritize Evacuation of US Citizens in Afghanistan. The title of the bill says it all.

HR5096, Afghan & Iraqi Allies Resettlement Improvement Act.

HR 5127, AWOL Act. To provide transparency regarding critical aspects of the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan, to prevent United States support to the Taliban.

HR 5133, Transparency in Reporting for an Accurate Count of Combat Equipment. Require an annual report on missing, lost, & stolen weapons, large amounts of ammo, destructive devices and explosive material.

HR 5134, Showing American Values by Evacuating (SAVE) Afghan Partners Act of 2021. To make 10,000 visas available for the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa program.

HR 5142. To award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal, in commemoration to the service members who perished in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021, during the evacuation of citizens of the United States and Afghan allies at Hamid Karzai International Airport.

HR 3385, HOPE for Afghan SIV Act of 2021 and **HR 3985, Allies Act of 2021**, are two bill submitted by Congressman Jason Crow. Both bill passed the House on 22 July 2021. When these bills were presented to the UVC the question was asked if there was enough time for these bills to save our allies. Events showed that there was not enough time.

Toxic Exposure

Toxic exposure is a priority with our major VSOs. The following is a list of the legislation in the 117th Congress that addresses toxic exposure which the UVC Legislative Committee is tracking.

HR 1273, Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act.

HR 1355 & S 454, K2 Veterans Care Act of 2021.

HR 1585 / S 565, Mark Take Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act.

HR 1972, Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021.

HR 2127 & S 927, Toxic Exposure in the American Military. (TEAM Act)

HR 2192, Camp Lejeune Toxic Exposure.

HR 2268 & HR 2269, Toxic exposure in Vietnam and Thailand.

HR 2372, to provide for a presumption of service connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to toxins.

HR 2436, The Veterans Burn Pit Exposure Recognition Act.

HR 2569, Address Agent Orange usage in the Republic of Vietnam.

HR 2601 & HR 2607, Toxic exposure and burn pit exposure.

HR 2742, Toxic exposure related to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

HR 2825, Toxic exposure at Fort McClellan, Alabama.

HR 3368, provides for a presumption of service-connection for certain veterans exposed to certain herbicides.

HR 3518, relates to Agent Orange exposure.

HR 3596, To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a task force on Agent Orange exposure.

HR 3852, Consistent exposure to jet fuel.

HR3967, Honoring our Pact Act of 2021.

HR 4241 / S 1973, PFAS Filthy Fifty Act.

HR 4339, Military PFAS Testing Disclosure Act.

HR 4340, PFAS Exposure Assessment & Document Act.

HR 4397, Burn pit related.

HR 4400, Expand the scope of the Department of Veterans Affairs open burn pit registry.

HR 4571 / S 2101, To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide mammography screening for veterans who served in locations associated with toxic exposure.

HR 4975, To prohibit the procurement, purchase, and sale by the Department of Defense of certain items containing a perfluoroalkyl substance.

HR 4976, To direct the Secretary of Defense to ensure that removal and remedial actions relating to PFAS contamination result in levels meeting or exceeding certain standards.

HR 4982, To establish the Agent Orange Veterans Service Medal.

S 952, Presumptive Benefits for War Fighters Exposed to Burn Pits and Other Toxins Act of 2021.

S 1121, PFAS Registry Act of 2021.

S 1151, Palomares Veterans Act of 2021.

S 1188, SFC Heath Robinson Burn Pit Transparency Act.

S 1393, Toxic Exposure Training Act of 2021.

S 1970, Clean Water for Military Families.

S 2555, PFAS Exposure & Document Act.

In conclusion the UVC Federal Legislative Committee is tracking over 400 bills at the Federal.