

# Helping Our Veterans With Agent Orange Exposure



*The herbicide Agent Orange was widely used during the Vietnam War and American veterans exposed to the chemical were later found to be at higher risk for a number of diseases, including cancer. For far too long, many of the veterans exposed to this deadly chemical have not received the benefits or the recognition they deserve. As Montana's only member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Jon is committed to passing legislation that reduces barriers to care at the VA, extends health and disability benefits to all veterans and increases research into the long-term effects of Agent Orange exposure.*

## **S.681 - Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act**

The VA currently presumes eligibility for service-connected disability benefits to veterans who served in Vietnam and may have been exposed to Agent Orange during the war. However, that eligibility extends only to those who served within the land borders of Vietnam.

Jon's *Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act* would also allow veterans who served in the waters offshore during the Vietnam War to be eligible for service-connected disability benefits as a result of Agent Orange exposure.

## **S.901 - Toxic Exposure Research Act**

Currently, many of the symptoms of toxic exposure are misdiagnosed in the descendants of veterans. *The Toxic Exposure Research Act* increases research into health conditions affecting the descendants of veterans who were exposed to toxins during their military service, particularly those exposed to Agent Orange during Vietnam. This bill also:

- Authorizes the Defense Secretary to declassify documents related to toxic exposure incidents.
- Creates a national outreach and education campaign about this issue.
- Establishes a quarterly reporting requirement on research progress.

## **S.2921 - The Veterans First Act**

Jon is sponsoring the bipartisan *Veterans First Act* to address issues plaguing the Veterans Choice Program. This bill will expand caregiver services, address leadership vacancies, and bolster the staff at the VA.

It will also increase research into the health conditions of descendants of veterans exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War and allow medical professionals to look into the long-term impacts of Agent Orange exposure on future generations.

*“ For far too long, the veterans of the Vietnam War never received the benefits or the recognition they deserved, but now we’re trying to right that terrible wrong. We need to finally provide proper care and benefits for veterans and families suffering from Agent Orange exposure, and we must make sure that today’s military members and future generations don’t suffer the same mistreatment. ”*

U.S. SENATOR FOR MONTANA

**JON TESTER**