

AN ACT concerning veterans.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the National Guard Veterans Exposure to Hazardous Materials Act.

Section 5. Definitions. In this Act:

"Depleted uranium" means uranium containing less uranium-235 than the naturally occurring distribution of uranium isotopes.

"Eligible member" means a member of the Illinois National Guard who served in the Persian Gulf War, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 101, or in an area designated as a combat zone by the President of the United States during Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Military physician" includes a physician who is under contract with the United States Department of Defense to provide physician services to members of the armed forces.

"Veteran" means any person honorably discharged from, or released under honorable conditions from active service in, the armed forces who served as an eligible member.

Section 10. Assistance in obtaining information on treatment. On and after October 1, 2007, the Department of

Veterans' Affairs shall assist any eligible member or veteran who (i) has been assigned a risk level I, II, or III for depleted uranium exposure by his or her branch of service, (ii) is referred by a military physician, or (iii) has reason to believe that he or she was exposed to depleted uranium during such service, in obtaining information on available federal treatment services, including a best practice health screening test for exposure to depleted uranium using a bioassay procedure involving sensitive methods capable of detecting depleted uranium at low levels and the use of equipment with the capacity to discriminate between different radioisotopes in naturally occurring levels of uranium and the characteristic ratio and marker for depleted uranium. No State funds shall be used to pay for such tests or other federal treatment services.

Section 15. Certification concerning National Guard information. On or before October 1, 2007, the Adjutant General shall certify to the General Assembly that members of the Illinois National Guard are informed of possible health risks associated with exposure to depleted uranium. The certification shall apply to both predeployment and post-mobilization information activities and post-deployment health screening.

Section 20. Task force.

(a) There is established a task force within the Department

of Veterans' Affairs to study the possible health effects of the exposure to hazardous materials, including, but not limited to, depleted uranium, as they relate to military service. The task force shall do the following:

(1) Consider initiation of a health registry for veterans returning from Afghanistan, Iraq, or other countries in which depleted uranium or other hazardous materials may be found.

(2) Develop a plan for an outreach plan to ensure that veterans and military personnel are informed of available resources.

(3) Prepare a report for service members concerning potential exposure to depleted uranium and other toxic chemical substances and the precautions recommended under combat and noncombat conditions while in a combat zone.

(4) Make any other recommendations the task force considers appropriate.

(b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) The Adjutant General or his or her designee.

(2) The Director of Veterans' Affairs or his or her designee.

(3) The Director of Public Health or his or her designee.

(4) Eight members who are members of the General Assembly, appointed 2 each by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives and 2 each

by the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(5) Two members who are veterans with knowledge of or experience with exposure to hazardous materials, appointed one each by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(6) Four members who are physicians or scientists with knowledge of or experience in the detection or health effects of exposure to depleted uranium or other hazardous materials, appointed one each by the President of the Senate, the Minority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(c) All appointments to the task force shall be made no later than 30 days after the effective date of this Act. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(d) The members of the task force shall select as chairpersons of the task force one Senator and one Representative from among the members appointed under paragraph (4) of subsection (b) of this Section. The chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held no later than 60 days after the effective date of this Act.

(e) Not later than January 31, 2008, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. The task force shall terminate on the date

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that it submits the report or on January 31, 2008, whichever is earlier.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.