
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8014

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Senators Patterson, Oke, Swecker, Roach, Heavey, McDonald, Swanson and Brown

Read first time 03/28/97. Referred to Committee on Government Operations.

1 TO THE HONORABLE WILLIAM J. CLINTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
2 STATES, AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
3 OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
4 THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE:

5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
7 represent and petition as follows:

8 WHEREAS, In 1990-91, nearly 700,000 United States troops were
9 deployed to the Persian Gulf for Operation Desert Shield/Storm; and

10 WHEREAS, These troops served honorably, accomplishing the goals of
11 subduing Saddam Hussein of Iraq and restoring independence to Kuwait;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Since returning to the United States, at least 70,000 Gulf
14 War veterans have reported a variety of debilitating, chronic illnesses
15 such as memory loss, fatigue, diarrhea, and insomnia, and no cause for
16 this Gulf War syndrome has yet been determined; and

17 WHEREAS, Although the Department of Defense initially maintained
18 there was no evidence that United States troops were exposed to
19 chemical or biological weapons which may have caused the illnesses, it
20 has since conceded that the destruction of an ammunition depot at

1 Khamisiyah, Iraq, may have exposed thousands of troops to nerve gas and
2 that there are dozens of other incidents meriting investigation; and

3 WHEREAS, The Department of Defense has increased the number of its
4 investigators of this subject from 12 to 110 and is currently financing
5 27 million dollars in new, independent research; and

6 WHEREAS, A recent study conducted by researchers at the University
7 of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas has concluded that some
8 Gulf War veterans are suffering from three primary syndromes indicating
9 brain and nerve damage caused by wartime exposure to combinations of
10 low-level nerve agents and other chemicals; and

11 WHEREAS, Doctors, nurses, and researchers at the Institute for
12 Molecular Medicine say they have contracted symptoms of Gulf War
13 syndrome and believe they have found a genetically altered version of
14 a microorganism that is the cause of the syndrome; and

15 WHEREAS, The Veterans Affairs Department and the Department of
16 Defense are providing free medical help to any veteran who believes he
17 or she is suffering from Gulf War syndrome;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the
19 President and the Department of Defense will continue to take all
20 necessary steps to assure that the cause of the illnesses is fully and
21 expeditiously investigated and that appropriate resources are devoted
22 to diagnosing and treating veterans suffering from Gulf War syndrome.

23 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
24 transmitted to the Honorable William J. Clinton, President of the
25 United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker
26 of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the
27 State of Washington, and the Secretary of the United States Department
28 of Defense.

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