

Rep. Opsommer offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 273.

A resolution to memorialize the United States Congress to acknowledge that the neurological disorder known as Parkinson's disease can be caused by exposure to Agent Orange and to require that the United States Department of Veterans Affairs offer assistance to U.S. Military members who, while serving their country, have acquired Parkinson's disease through their exposure to Agent Orange.

Whereas, Agent Orange was an herbicide used in Vietnam to kill unwanted plants and to remove leaves from trees which otherwise provided cover for the enemy. After its use, it was realized that Agent Orange contained dioxin, which is related to a number of diseases, cancers, and other disorders. Many U.S. veterans are known to have been exposed to significant amounts of Agent Orange while fulfilling their military obligations; and

Whereas, As required by law, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recognizes many diseases as being associated with Agent Orange, including chloracne, acute peripheral neuropathy, and numerous cancers such as Hodgkin's disease, multiple myeloma, and prostate cancer. Veterans who served in Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975 and who acquire one of the recognized diseases are entitled to VA-furnished hospital care, medical services, and possibly nursing home care; and

Whereas, Several studies performed at internationally recognized research institutions, including St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, have linked Parkinson's disease to Agent Orange and other pesticides. Research work at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital linked genetic alterations associated with an increased risk of Parkinson's disease to pesticide exposures; and

Whereas, Parkinson's disease should be added to the VA list of recognized diseases associated with Agent Orange. The Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office in Winston-Salem, North Carolina has determined in two cases that the Parkinson's disease of veterans could have been caused by their contact with Agent Orange while on active military duty; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the United States Congress to acknowledge that the neurological disorder known as Parkinson's disease can be caused by exposure to Agent Orange and to require that the United States Department of Veterans Affairs offer assistance to U.S. Military members who, while serving their country, have acquired Parkinson's disease through their exposure to Agent Orange; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.