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Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
Re: House Bill 414

Chairman Johnson, Vice Chair Lanese, Ranking Member Craig and the members of the Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security Committee. Thank you for allowing me to testify on House Bill 414.

I am an Atomic Veteran. I served in the United States Air Force from 1960 to 1964 and assigned to the 6th Weather Squadron (mbl.) at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. In February 1962 I along with our squadron mobile personnel were assigned to Joint Task Force Eight to participate in Operation Dominic. My group was sent to Christmas Island where just south of Christmas Island 24 airdrops from a B-52 took place from 25 April through 11 July. Five more airdrops were detonated over the open ocean near Johnston Island. These tests were conducted for the purpose of weapon development. Five high-altitude bursts were lofted by rockets from Johnston for the purpose of studying the effects of nuclear detonations as defensive weapons against ballistic missiles. The Navy conducted two nuclear tests in the open ocean. Most of the airdrops south of Christmas Island were of the intermediate range with five being in the low megaton range and one in the megaton range. Intermediate yield -20 – 1,000 KT megaton over 1,000 KT. We worked long and hard hours. We provided accurate weather observational data, which was vital to conduct the nuclear tests.

The only recognition or appreciation we received for putting our lives in harms way was a thank you letter and a certificate for participating in Operation Dominic. During atmospheric tests from 1945 to 1962, approximately 235 nuclear tests were conducted with approximately 232,000 personnel involved, with little or no recognition. July 16, (1945) is the date the first Atomic Bomb was detonated at Alamogordo, New Mexico as part of the Manhattan Project. Code name Trinity was in the 20 KT range. Most film badges were unreliable or defective because of adverse weather conditions. This is why I and NAAV would like July 16 to be designated as Atomic Veterans Day for each year forward. The hope is for enough states to recognize this day to have Congress put it on the federal calendar. So far, 12 states include Minnesota, Wisconsin, Virginia, Oregon and Michigan have passed legislation to recognize this day. It is overdue time for the Atomic Veteran to be recognized.

I urge you to vote in the affirmative for HB 414. Thank you.