

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge the Congress of the United States to enact the Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act.

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Ohio (The House of Representatives concurring):

WHEREAS, Throughout the state's and the nation's history, brave Ohioans have answered the call of duty and service, defending our freedoms as members of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, As a result of the Manhattan Project, the United States conducted the Trinity nuclear test, the first detonation of a nuclear device, in New Mexico on July 16, 1945; and

WHEREAS, Over two hundred thousand American service members, including Ohioans, participated in above ground nuclear tests between 1945 and 1962, were part of the United States military occupation forces in or around Hiroshima and Nagasaki before 1946, or were held as a prisoner of war in or near Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and

WHEREAS, These atomic veterans may have been exposed to radiation as a result of their military service and, due to that exposure, may have developed cancer or other medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, Many atomic veterans were prevented by secrecy laws or oaths from seeking medical care or disability compensation from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for conditions they may have developed as a result of radiation exposure; and

WHEREAS, In 1996, the United States Congress repealed the Nuclear Radiation and Secrecy Agreements Act, freeing atomic veterans to describe their military involvement in nuclear testing in order to file for benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, Atomic veterans may be eligible for free medical care from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and compensation in the form of a partial or full service-connected disability allowance, including potential payments to a surviving spouse or children; and

WHEREAS, The Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act, introduced in the 116th Congress as S. 555 and H.R. 1377, included veterans who participated in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands between January 1, 1977, and December 31, 1980, as radiation-exposed veterans for purposes of the Department of Veterans Affairs' presumption of service connection for specified cancers; and

WHEREAS, The Ohio Department of Veterans Services provides free assistance to Ohio veterans and their dependents in developing and submitting disability compensation claims to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, The National Association of Atomic Veterans was formed in 1979 to help atomic veterans obtain medical care and assistance; and

WHEREAS, It is altogether fitting and proper that atomic veterans be recognized for their service and sacrifice to the nation; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the 134th General Assembly of the State of Ohio, urge the United States Congress to enact the Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a duly authenticated copy of this resolution to the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate, and the National Association of Atomic Veterans so that members of Congress, the organization, and other atomic veterans and their families may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of the State of Ohio in this matter.

Speaker _____ *of the House of Representatives.*

President _____ *of the Senate.*

Adopted _____, 20____