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United States Senate Unanimously Passes Legislation to Expand Health Care for Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits

Last week, the United States Senate passed S.3541, *the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act*. The bipartisan bill aims to expand health care for post-9/11 combat veterans, including those suffering from effects relating to burn pit exposure from Iraq and Afghanistan. The legislation is now headed to the United States House of Representatives before it makes its way to President Biden's desk.

- **S.3541 - *the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act*** would provide post-9/11 combat veterans access to the Department of Veterans Affairs health care by expanding the period of eligibility from five years to ten years after discharge, and establish a one-year open enrollment period for any other post 9/11 combat veteran. The legislation would also direct the Department of Veterans Affairs to incorporate toxic exposure clinical screening for veterans and mandate education and training for department personnel on identifying, treating, and assessing the impact of toxic exposure. In addition, the measure would strengthen federal analysis on the treatment of veterans for medical conditions related to toxic exposure, mortality of veterans who served in Southwest Asia, health trends of post-9/11 veterans, and cancer rates among veterans.

“PORAC was encouraged to see this important bill pass the Senate unanimously. A number of our officers here at PORAC are veterans from Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraq Freedom, both of which involved toxic exposure,” **said Brian Marvel, President of the Peace Officers Research Association of California**. “We appreciate the Senate’s hard work to ensure that our veterans are well-supported and cared for.”

About the Peace Officers Research Association of California:

The Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) was incorporated in 1953 as a professional federation of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. PORAC represents over 75,000 public safety members and over 920 associations, making it the largest law enforcement organization in California and the largest statewide association in the nation.