

STATE OF KANSAS



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HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS  
INSURANCE  
TRANSPORTATION  
VETERANS, MILITARY & HOMELAND SECURITY

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The Honorable Senator Pete Brungardt, Chairman  
Senate Standing Committee on Federal and State Affairs  
State House Room 144-S  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Reference HCR 5016

Dear Chairman Brungardt;

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of this committee for allowing me to testify today in support of HCR 5016.

HCR 5016 is a Concurrent Resolution urging the United States Congress to extend equal benefits and compensation for the treatment of diseases associated with Agent Orange exposure to Vietnam era veterans who served outside of Vietnam.

During the Vietnam War, the military made extensive use of a powerful and toxic defoliant called Agent Orange to clear areas of dense vegetation. Agent Orange was also extensively used for the same purpose in areas such as Thailand where many veterans now afflicted by exposure to Agent Orange, proudly served in support of troops in Vietnam, without ever setting foot in Vietnam itself.

It is now known that exposure to Agent Orange causes a variety of devastating health effects such as increased rates of cancer, immune and neurological disorders, and genetic maladies which can lead to birth defects in the children of those who were exposed.

In my case, I spent a year in Vietnam as an infantry officer and had frequent exposure to Agent Orange. In 2005, I was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease and my exposure to Agent Orange was deemed to be what caused me to develop the disease. At the urging of my neurologist, I applied for disability benefits with the Veterans Administration. After a very complete investigation, the VA granted my request for disability benefits.

Sn Fed & State  
Attachment 1

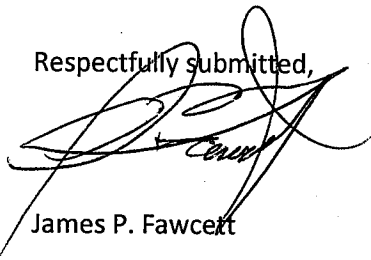
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I have since learned that there are thousands of veterans struggling to obtain the same medical benefits and compensation as I received. I am aware of only one veteran who I have talked with who has finally received some medical benefits from the VA for treatment of his disease.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, House Concurrent Resolution 5016 urges congress to work with the VA to insure that all veterans who are now dealing with many of these diseases attributed to Agent Orange exposure, are granted the same benefits, regardless of whether or not they had "boot on the ground" in Vietnam.

Thank you. I will now stand for questions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James P. Fawcett", written over the typed name.

James P. Fawcett

State Representative

65<sup>th</sup> District

24 January, 2012