

STATE OF KANSAS



MARIO GOICO
REPRESENTATIVE, 100TH DISTRICT
SEDGWICK COUNTY
1254 N. PINE GROVE CT.
WICHITA, KS 67212
316-721-3682

STATE CAPITOL—268-W
TOPEKA, KS 66612
785-296-7663

TOLL FREE (DURING SESSION) 1-800-432-3924

FAX: 785-368-6385

E-MAIL: mario.goico@house.ks.gov

TOPEKA

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Honorable Chairman Pete Brungardt,
and members of the Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee

Agent Orange was the code name for an herbicide developed for the military, primarily for use in tropical climates. The purpose of the product was to deny an enemy cover and concealment in dense terrain by defoliating trees and shrubbery where the enemy could hide. The product was principally effective against broad-leaf foliage, such as the dense jungle-like terrain found in Southeast Asia.

The combined product was mixed with kerosene or diesel fuel and dispersed by aircraft. Spraying was usually done either from helicopters or from low-flying C-123 aircraft. Spray runs were also conducted from trucks, boats, and backpack sprayers. The United State Air Force records show that at least 6,542 spraying missions took place.

Agent Orange was a 50-50 mix of two chemicals, known conventionally as 2, 4-D, and 2, 4, 5-T. The dioxin found in Agent Orange is thought to be harmful agent. Veterans who served in the South during the war have increased rates of cancer (throat, prostate, lung, colon, liver, acute/chronic leukemia, Hodgkin's lymphoma and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, soft tissue sarcoma), and nerve, digestive, skin, respiratory disorders, and higher incidents of their wives having miscarriages or children born with birth defects.

Veterans began to file claims in 1977 to the Department of Veterans Affairs for disability payments for health care for conditions they believed were associated with exposure to Agent Orange, but their claims were denied unless they could prove the condition began when they were in the service or within one year of their discharge.

By April 1993, the Department of Veterans Affairs had only compensated 486 victims, although it had received disability claims form 39,419 soldiers who had been exposed to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam.

Some of the exposure our forces received was not by direct contact (physically being sprayed with the products). Military personnel who loaded airplanes and helicopters

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probably sustained some of the heaviest exposures. Some of the exposure was probably also caused by residue on returning airplanes.

This resolution urges the United States Congress to extend equal benefits for the treatment of Agent Orange exposure to Vietnam veterans who served outside of Vietnam who were exposed by contact with contaminated aircrafts.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mario Goico', written in a cursive style.

Representative Mario Goico