

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 454

To provide health care and benefits to veterans who were exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 25, 2021

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To provide health care and benefits to veterans who were exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “K2 Veterans Care Act
5 of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. PRESUMPTIONS OF SERVICE CONNECTION FOR**
2 **CERTAIN DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH EXPO-**
3 **SURE TO CERTAIN TOXIC SUBSTANCES BY**
4 **MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES SERVING AT**
5 **KARSHI KHANABAD AIR BASE, UZBEKISTAN.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of section 1110 of
7 title 38, United States Code, and subject to section 1113
8 of such title, a disease specified in subsection (b) becoming
9 manifest in a veteran who served on active duty in the
10 Armed Forces at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan,
11 at any time during the period beginning on January 1,
12 2001, and ending on December 31, 2005, shall be consid-
13 ered to have been incurred in or aggravated by such serv-
14 ice, notwithstanding that there is no record of evidence
15 of such disease during the period of such service.

16 (b) DISEASES SPECIFIED.—The diseases specified in
17 this subsection are the illnesses and diseases that the Na-
18 tional Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
19 determine have a positive association, including a suffi-
20 cient, limited, or suggestive association, with exposure to
21 any of the following substances:

22 (1) Jet fuel.

23 (2) Volatile organic compounds.

24 (3) High levels of particulate matter and dust
25 resulting from open burn pits, as defined in section
26 201(c) of the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans'

1 Benefits Improvement Act of 2012 (Public Law
2 112–260; 38 U.S.C. 527 note).

3 (4) Depleted uranium.

4 (5) Asbestos.

5 (6) Lead-based paint.

6 **SEC. 3. HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS EXPOSED TO TOXIC**
7 **SUBSTANCES WHILE SERVING AS MEMBERS**
8 **OF THE ARMED FORCES AT KARSHI**
9 **KHANABAD AIR BASE, UZBEKISTAN.**

10 Section 1710(e) of title 38, United States Code, is
11 amended—

12 (1) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the
13 following new subparagraph:

14 “(G) A veteran who served on active duty in the
15 Armed Forces at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan,
16 during the period beginning on January 1, 2001, and end-
17 ing on December 31, 2005, is eligible for hospital care,
18 medical services, and nursing home care under subsection
19 (a)(2)(F) for any illness or disease for which the National
20 Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine deter-
21 mine has a positive association, including a sufficient, lim-
22 ited, or suggestive association, with exposure to any of the
23 following substances, notwithstanding that there is insuffi-
24 cient medical evidence to conclude that such illness or dis-
25 ease is attributable to such service:

1 “(i) Jet fuel.

2 “(ii) Volatile organic compounds.

3 “(iii) High levels of particulate matter and dust
4 resulting from open burn pits, as defined in section
5 201(c) of the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans’
6 Benefits Improvement Act of 2012 (Public Law
7 112–260; 38 U.S.C. 527 note).

8 “(iv) Depleted uranium.

9 “(v) Asbestos.

10 “(vi) Lead-based paint.”; and

11 (2) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking “or (F)”
12 and inserting “(F), or (G)”.

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