

108TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1483

To require certain studies regarding the health effects of exposure to depleted uranium munitions, to require the cleanup and mitigation of depleted uranium contamination at sites of depleted uranium munition use and production in the United States, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 27, 2003

Mr. McDERMOTT (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Ms. LEE, and Ms. BALDWIN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To require certain studies regarding the health effects of exposure to depleted uranium munitions, to require the cleanup and mitigation of depleted uranium contamination at sites of depleted uranium munition use and production in the United States, 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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the  
5 “Depleted Uranium Munitions Study Act of 2003” .

1 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of  
2 this Act is as follows:

- 3 Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- 4 Sec. 2. Findings.
- 5 Sec. 3. Purposes.
- 6 Sec. 4. Study of health effects of exposure to depleted uranium.
- 7 Sec. 5. EPA studies of environmental contamination by depleted uranium.
- 8 Sec. 6. Environmental mitigation and cleanup requirements for depleted uranium.

9 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

10 Congress finds the following:

11 (1) The highest regard should be given to the  
12 health and safety of the members of the United  
13 States Armed Forces.

14 (2) Depleted uranium, a toxic, carcinogenic,  
15 and radioactive material with a half-life of  
16 4,500,000,000 years, is used as an ingredient in var-  
17 ious munitions used by the United States Armed  
18 Forces.

19 (3) Depleted uranium munitions were used by  
20 the United States Armed Forces in 1991 during the  
21 Persian Gulf War and during the conflicts in the  
22 former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Bosnia,  
Kosovo, Serbia, and Montenegro) during the 1990s,  
with approximately 300 metric tons of depleted ura-  
nium being used during the Persian Gulf War, ap-  
proximately three metric tons being used in Bosnia,  
and approximately nine metric tons being used in  
Kosovo, Serbia, and Montenegro.

1           (4) Among the characteristics of depleted ura-  
2 nium munitions are that—

3           (A) they are pyrophoric, resulting in the  
4 munition burning upon impact with a target;  
5 and

6           (B) the impact of a depleted uranium mu-  
7 nition on a target creates aerosol particles,  
8 which can be inhaled.

9           (5) The United States has provided or sold de-  
10pleted uranium and depleted uranium munitions to  
11allied nations, and the armed forces of the United  
12Kingdom used depleted uranium munitions during  
13the Persian Gulf War.

14           (6) Depleted uranium munitions have been used  
15at numerous United States military installations,  
16proving grounds, and testing facilities.

17           (7) No definitive cause has been established for  
18the various illnesses (commonly referred to as Gulf  
19War Syndrome) that affect approximately 130,000  
20members and former members of the United States  
21Armed Forces who served in Southwest Asia during  
22the Persian Gulf War.

23           (8) The Iraqi Government has claimed that de-  
24pleted uranium from depleted uranium munitions is

1 affecting the health of their people, although such  
2 claims have not been independently verified.

3 (9) The United States Navy and the British  
4 Royal Navy are phasing out use of depleted uranium  
5 munitions, and the Canadian Navy has ceased using  
6 depleted uranium munitions.

7 (10) It has been reported that depleted ura-  
8 nium munitions use has proliferated to more than  
9 20 nations.

10 (11) The 1949 Geneva Convention specifically  
11 outlines the precautions warring nations must take  
12 to avoid harming civilian populations, and it would  
13 be a violation of the 1977 Protocol to that Conven-  
14 tion to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suf-  
15 fering to civilians, as depleted uranium munitions  
16 may cause.

17 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

18 The purposes of this Act are—

19 (1) to provide for studies of—

20 (A) the health effects resulting from expo-  
21 sure to depleted uranium munitions by inhala-  
22 tion, ingestion, or injection; and

23 (B) environmental contamination caused  
24 by depleted uranium at sites where depleted  
25 uranium was used in conflict, development, test-

1           ing, or training and at sites where depleted ura-  
2           nium and depleted uranium munitions were  
3           produced; and

4           (2) to require the cleanup and mitigation of de-  
5           pleted uranium contamination at sites of depleted  
6           uranium munition use and production in the United  
7           States.

8   **SEC. 4. STUDY OF HEALTH EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO DE-**  
9                                   **PLETED URANIUM.**

10          (a) **STUDY.**—The Director of the Agency for Toxic  
11          Substances and Disease Registry and the Director of the  
12          Center for Disease Control and Prevention shall jointly  
13          conduct a comprehensive study of the health effects of ex-  
14          posure to depleted uranium munitions on uranium-exposed  
15          veterans and on children of uranium-exposed veterans who  
16          were born after the exposure of the uranium-exposed vet-  
17          erans to depleted uranium.

18          (b) **URANIUM-EXPOSED VETERANS.**—In this section,  
19          the term “uranium-exposed veteran” means a member or  
20          former member of the United States Armed Forces who  
21          handled, came in contact with, or had the likelihood of  
22          contact with depleted uranium munitions while on active  
23          duty, including members and former members who—

24                  (1) were exposed to smoke from fires resulting  
25                  from the burning of vehicles containing depleted ura-

1       nium munitions or fires at depots at which depleted  
2       uranium munitions were stored;

3           (2) worked within environments containing de-  
4       pleted uranium dust or residues from depleted ura-  
5       nium munitions;

6           (3) were within a structure or vehicle while it  
7       was struck by a depleted uranium munition;

8           (4) climbed on or entered equipment or struc-  
9       tures struck by a depleted uranium munition; or

10          (5) were medical personnel who provided initial  
11       treatment to members of the Armed Forces de-  
12       scribed in paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4).

13       (c) PUBLIC HEALTH ASSESSMENT.—The Directors  
14       also shall jointly conduct a public health assessment of  
15       persons who are thought to have an epidemiological link—

16           (1) to any United States military installation or  
17       facility at which depleted uranium munitions have  
18       been, or currently are, used; and

19           (2) any production facility in the United States  
20       at which depleted uranium or depleted uranium mu-  
21       nitions are currently, or have been, produced.

22       (d) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date  
23       of the enactment of this Act, the Directors shall submit  
24       to Congress a report on the results of the study under  
25       subsection (a) and the assessment under subsection (c).

1 The Directors shall include in the report a list of diseases  
2 or conditions that are found to exist within the populations  
3 specified in subsection (a) and their rate of occurrence  
4 compared to the general population.

5 **SEC. 5. EPA STUDIES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINA-**  
6 **TION BY DEPLETED URANIUM.**

7 (a) LIST OF DEPLETED URANIUM SITES IN UNITED  
8 STATES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the  
9 enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall pro-  
10 vide to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection  
11 Agency a list of all sites in the United States where de-  
12pleted uranium munitions have been used or produced and  
13 a site-specific map of each site.

14 (b) EPA STUDIES.—After receipt of the list and  
15 maps under subsection (a), the Administrator shall con-  
16 duct a comprehensive environmental study of each site  
17 specified on the list evaluating the possible contamination  
18 of the soil, air, water, and vegetation by depleted uranium  
19 at that site.

20 (c) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date  
21 of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall sub-  
22 mit to the Secretary of Defense and the Committee on  
23 Armed Services and the Committee on Government Re-  
24 form of the House of Representatives and the Committee

1 on Armed Services and the Committee on Governmental  
2 Affairs of the Senate a report—

3 (1) describing the extent of contamination by  
4 depleted uranium at each site studied by the Admin-  
5 istrator pursuant to subsection (b);

6 (2) providing site-specific recommendations for  
7 the mitigation and cleanup of each such site; and

8 (3) providing general recommendations regard-  
9 ing the cleanup of sites where depleted uranium has  
10 been used on foreign lands.

11 **SEC. 6. ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION AND CLEANUP RE-**  
12 **QUIREMENTS FOR DEPLETED URANIUM.**

13 (a) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CLEANUP PLAN.—  
14 Not later than one year after receiving the report required  
15 by section 5(c), the Secretary of Defense shall develop a  
16 plan for the mitigation and cleanup of depleted uranium  
17 at those sites covered by the report. The plan shall include  
18 a prioritized schedule for the mitigation and cleanup of  
19 such sites. The Secretary shall submit a copy of the plan  
20 to the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee  
21 on Government Reform of the House of Representatives  
22 and the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee  
23 on Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

24 (b) CLEANUP.—After filing the plan under subsection  
25 (a), the Secretary of Defense shall commence, directly or

1 by contract, the mitigation and cleanup of depleted ura-  
2 nium at each site covered by the report required by section  
3 5(c). The mitigation and cleanup shall be conducted in the  
4 manner and scope specified in the report.

5 (c) APPLICABILITY OF NEPA.—The cleanup and  
6 mitigation required by subsection (b) shall be carried out  
7 in a manner consistent with the National Environmental  
8 Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), notwith-  
9 standing any exemption to any of the provisions of that  
10 Act for the Department of Defense or any element thereof.

11 (d) PROGRESS REPORTS.—The Secretary of Defense  
12 shall submit annual progress reports to the the Adminis-  
13 trator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the  
14 congressional committees specified in subsection (a) until  
15 the mitigation and cleanup of depleted uranium at those  
16 sites covered by the report required by section 5(c) are  
17 complete.

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