

“SEC. 109. SURVEY OF PERSIAN GULF VETERANS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out a survey of Persian Gulf veterans to gather information on the incidence and nature of health problems occurring in Persian Gulf veterans and their families.

“(b) COORDINATION WITH DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Any survey under subsection (a) shall be carried out in coordination with the Secretary of Defense.

“(c) PERSIAN GULF VETERAN.—For purposes of this section, a Persian Gulf veteran is an individual who served on active duty in the Armed Forces in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War as defined in section 101(33) of title 38, United States Code.

“SEC. 110. AUTHORIZATION FOR EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDIES.

“(a) STUDY OF HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF PERSIAN GULF SERVICE.—If the National Academy of Sciences includes in the report required by section 706(b) of the Veterans Health Care Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-585) [set out in a note under section 527 of this title] a finding that there is a sound basis for an epidemiological study or studies on the health consequences of service in the Persian Gulf theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War and recommends the conduct of such a study or studies, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is authorized to carry out such study.

“(b) OVERSIGHT.—(1) The Secretary shall seek to enter into an agreement with the Medical Follow-Up Agency (MFUA) of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences for (A) the review of proposals to conduct the research referred to in subsection (a), (B) oversight of such research, and (C) review of the research findings.

“(2) If the Secretary is unable to enter into an agreement under paragraph (1) with the entity specified in that paragraph, the Secretary shall enter into an agreement described in that paragraph with another appropriate scientific organization which does not have a connection to the Department of Veterans Affairs. In such a case, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives, at least 90 days before the date on which the agreement is entered into, notice in writing identifying the organization with which the Secretary intends to enter into the agreement.

“(c) ACCESS TO DATA.—The Secretary shall enter into agreements with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make available for the purposes of any study described in subsection (a) all data that the Secretary, in consultation with the National Academy of Sciences and the contractor for the study, considers relevant to the study.

“(d) AUTHORIZATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Department such sums as are necessary for the conduct of studies described in subsection (a).”

[Pub. L. 104-262, title III, §352(b), Oct. 9, 1996, 110 Stat. 3211, provided that: “Any diagnostic testing and medical examinations undertaken by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the purpose of the study required by subsection (a) of such section [section 107(a) of Pub. L. 103-446, set out above] during the period beginning on October 1, 1996, and ending on the date of the enactment of this Act [Oct. 9, 1996] is hereby ratified.”]

REPORT TO CONGRESS ON INTENTION TO PAY  
COMPENSATION

Section 106(c) of Pub. L. 103-446 directed Secretary of Veterans Affairs, not later than 60 days after Nov. 2, 1994, to submit to Congress a report stating whether or not the Secretary intended to pay compensation as provided in this section.

**Executive Documents**

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 12961

Ex. Ord. No. 12961, May 26, 1995, 60 F.R. 28507, which established the Presidential Advisory Committee on

Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses, was revoked by Ex. Ord. No. 13138, §3(g), Sept. 30, 1999, 64 F.R. 53880, formerly set out as a note under section 1013 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

EX. ORD. NO. 13034. EXTENSION OF PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON GULF WAR VETERANS' ILLNESSES

Ex. Ord. No. 13034, Jan. 30, 1997, 62 F.R. 5137, provided:

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

SECTION 1. *Extension.* The Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses (the “Committee”), established pursuant to Executive Order 12961 [formerly set out above] of May 26, 1995, is hereby extended for the purposes set forth herein. All provisions of that order relating to membership and administration shall remain in effect. All Committee appointments, as well as the President's designation of a Chairperson, shall remain in effect. The limitations set forth in section 2(c)-(e) and section 4(a) of Executive Order 12961 shall also remain in effect. The Committee shall remain subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, [former] 5 U.S.C. App. [see 5 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.].

SEC. 2. *Functions.* (a) The Committee shall report to the President through the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(b) The Committee shall have two principal roles:

(1) Oversight of the ongoing investigation being conducted by the Department of Defense with the assistance, as appropriate, of other executive departments and agencies into possible chemical or biological warfare agent exposures during the Gulf War; and

(2) Evaluation of the Federal Government's plan for and progress towards the implementation of the Committee's recommendations contained in its Final Report submitted on December 31, 1996.

(c) The Committee shall provide advice and recommendations related to its oversight and evaluation responsibilities.

(d) The Committee may also provide additional advice and recommendations prompted by any new developments related to its original functions as set forth in section 2(b) of Executive Order 12961.

(e) The Committee shall submit by letter a status report by April 30, 1997, and a final supplemental report by October 31, 1997, unless otherwise directed by the President.

SEC. 3. *General Provisions.* (a) The Committee shall terminate 30 days after submitting its final supplemental report.

(b) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and it is not intended to create any right, benefit or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

**§ 1118. Presumptions of service connection for illnesses associated with service in the Persian Gulf during the Persian Gulf War**

(a)(1) For purposes of section 1110 of this title, and subject to section 1113 of this title, each illness, if any, described in paragraph (2) shall be considered to have been incurred in or aggravated by service referred to in that paragraph, notwithstanding that there is no record of evidence of such illness during the period of such service.

(2) An illness referred to in paragraph (1) is any diagnosed or undiagnosed illness that—

(A) the Secretary determines in regulations prescribed under this section to warrant a presumption of service connection by reason of

having a positive association with exposure to a biological, chemical, or other toxic agent, environmental or wartime hazard, or preventive medicine or vaccine known or presumed to be associated with service in the Armed Forces in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War; and

(B) becomes manifest within the period, if any, prescribed in such regulations in a veteran who served on active duty in that theater of operations during that war and by reason of such service was exposed to such agent, hazard, or medicine or vaccine.

(3) For purposes of this subsection, a veteran who served on active duty in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War and has an illness described in paragraph (2) shall be presumed to have been exposed by reason of such service to the agent, hazard, or medicine or vaccine associated with the illness in the regulations prescribed under this section unless there is conclusive evidence to establish that the veteran was not exposed to the agent, hazard, or medicine or vaccine by reason of such service.

(4) For purposes of this section, signs or symptoms that may be a manifestation of an undiagnosed illness include the signs and symptoms listed in section 1117(g) of this title.

(b) The Secretary shall ensure that any determination made on or after the date of the enactment of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 regarding a presumption of service connection based on a toxic exposure under this section is made pursuant to subchapter VII of this chapter.

(Added Pub. L. 105-277, div. C, title XVI, §1602(a)(1), Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2681-742; amended Pub. L. 107-103, title II, §202(b)(2), (d)(1), Dec. 27, 2001, 115 Stat. 989; Pub. L. 117-168, title II, §202(d)(3), Aug. 10, 2022, 136 Stat. 1775.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### REFERENCES IN TEXT

The date of the enactment of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022, referred to in subsec. (b), is the date of enactment of Pub. L. 117-168, which was approved Aug. 10, 2022.

##### AMENDMENTS

2022—Subsecs. (b) to (e). Pub. L. 117-168 added subsec. (b) and struck out former subsecs. (b) to (e) which related to determinations of presumptions of service connection between illnesses and exposure to toxic agents during the Persian Gulf War.

2001—Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 107-103, §202(b)(2), added par. (4).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 107-103, §202(d)(1), substituted “on September 30, 2011” for “10 years after the first day of the fiscal year in which the National Academy of Sciences submits to the Secretary the first report under section 1603 of the Persian Gulf War Veterans Act of 1998”.

#### Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

##### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2001 AMENDMENT

Amendment by section 202(b)(2) of Pub. L. 107-103 effective Mar. 1, 2002, see section 202(c) of Pub. L. 107-103, set out as a note under section 1117 of this title.

#### § 1119. Presumptions of toxic exposure

(a) CONSIDERATION OF RECORDS.—If a veteran submits to the Secretary a claim for compensation for a service-connected disability under section 1110 of this title with evidence of a disability and a toxic exposure that occurred during active military, naval, air, or space service, the Secretary may, in adjudicating such claim, consider—

(1) any record of the veteran in an exposure tracking record system; and

(2) if no record of the veteran in an exposure tracking record system indicates that the veteran was subject to a toxic exposure during active military, naval, air, or space service, the totality of the circumstances of the service of the veteran.

(b) PRESUMPTION OF SPECIFIC TOXIC EXPOSURE FOR MEMBERS WHO SERVED IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS.—(1) The Secretary shall, for purposes of section 1110 and chapter 17 of this title, presume that any covered veteran was exposed to the substances, chemicals, and airborne hazards identified in the list under paragraph (2) during the service of the covered veteran specified in subsection (c)(1), unless there is affirmative evidence to establish that the covered veteran was not exposed to any such substances, chemicals, or hazards in connection with such service.

(2) The Secretary shall—

(A) establish and maintain a list that contains an identification of one or more such substances, chemicals, and airborne hazards as the Secretary, in collaboration with the Secretary of Defense, may determine appropriate for purposes of this section; and

(B) determine, using procedures consistent with section 1172 of this title and through the conduct of a formal evaluation under section 1173 of this title, whether to establish an end date for a covered veteran to qualify for presumptions of exposure under this section, if appropriate, but in no case establish an end date earlier than the last day of the period specified in section 101(33) for the Persian Gulf War.

(3) Beginning not later than two years after the date of the enactment of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022, and not less frequently than once every two years thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report identifying any additions or removals to the list under paragraph (2) during the period covered by the report.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “covered veteran” means any veteran who—

(A) on or after August 2, 1990, performed active military, naval, air, or space service while assigned to a duty station in, including airspace above—

- (i) Bahrain;
- (ii) Iraq;
- (iii) Kuwait;
- (iv) Oman;
- (v) Qatar;