

[Representative Jennifer Gonzalez-Colon IAVA-Backed Burn Pits Legislation](#)

WASHINGTON, DC (August 22, 2018) – Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), the leading voice of the Post-9/11 generation of veterans, is proud to announce that U.S. Rep. Jennifer Gonzalez-Colon (R-PR) has become a cosponsor of the *Burn Pits Accountability Act* (S. 3181/H.R. 5671), to improve the tracking and reporting of servicemembers' exposure to burn pits and airborne toxins during their deployments.

Congresswoman Gonzalez-Colon was first elected to Congress in 2016, serving as Puerto Rico's only Representative to Congress, and is the first woman elected to the role. She currently serves on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, as well as the Committees for Small Business, and Natural Resources.

"Per our most recent IAVA Member Survey, 80% of IAVA members report being exposed to burn pits and 63% of those exposed report symptoms. I count myself among the 63%," **said IAVA Chief Policy Officer, Melissa Bryant.** "According to the VA, about 3.5 million servicemembers and veterans are eligible for enrollment in the VA's Burn Pit and Toxic Exposures Registry yet only 154,000 are enrolled. We want to thank Rep. Gonzalez-Colon in helping us by signing onto this important piece of legislation."

The *Burn Pits Accountability Act*, sponsored by Reps. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) and Brian Mast (R-FL), now has 119 House cosponsors, and 5 in the Senate. The bill is among [IAVA's Big Six priorities for 2018](#), including Suicide Prevention, Government Reform, #SheWhoBorneTheBattle, #DefendTheGIBill, and Medicinal Cannabis Use for Veterans.