

Sen. Collins is Latest Supporter of the IAVA-Led Burn Pits Bill

WASHINGTON, DC (November 16, 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. Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) has become a cosponsor of the *Burn Pits Accountability Act* (S. 3181/H.R. 5671), to improve the tracking and reporting of service members' exposure to burn pits and airborne toxins during their deployments.

First elected to the Senate in 1996, Sen. Collins ranks thirteenth in Senate seniority and is the most senior Republican woman. A member of the Intelligence Committee, she co-authored a major overhaul of our nation's intelligence community after the September 11th attacks and also led the successful effort to repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law that prohibited gay and lesbian Americans from serving openly in the military.

"Our most recent IAVA Member Survey told us that 80% of IAVA members report being exposed to burn pits and 63% of those exposed report symptoms," said **IAVA Founder and CEO Paul Rieckhoff**. "Approximately 3.5 million service members and veterans are eligible for enrollment in the VA's Burn Pit and Toxic Exposures Registry, according to the VA, yet only 161,000 are enrolled. We want to thank Senator Collins for cosponsoring this important legislation to require accountability by the Department of Defense to track airborne toxic exposures."

The *Burn Pits Accountability Act*, sponsored by Sens. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK), now has 12 Senate cosponsors, and 145 in the House. The bill is among IAVA's [Big Six priorities for 2018](#), including Suicide Prevention, Government Reform, #SheWhoBorneTheBattle, #DefendTheGIBill, and Medicinal Cannabis Research for Veterans.