

# Two New Members of Congress Back 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. Reps. Nita Lowey (D-NY) and Pete Visclosky (D-IN) have become cosponsors 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.

Rep. Lowey is the top Democrat on the influential House Appropriations Committee, which funds the entire federal government, including the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs. Just elected to her 16th term, Lowey, was recognized by the *New York Post* as “a key general in the battle to rebuild New York” for her leadership in securing over \$20 billion for recovery efforts after September 11, 2001.

Rep. Visclosky is the top Democrat on the powerful Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, charged with funding the Pentagon's annual operating budget. First elected in 1984, his focus has been on defending our national security, building upon our defense industrial base, and supporting America's 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 servicemembers 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 Reps. Lowey and Visclosky 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 Reps. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) and Brian Mast (R-FL), now has 145 House cosponsors, and 12 in the Senate. The bill is among IAVA's [Big Six priorities for 2018](#), including Suicide Prevention, Government Reform, #SheWhoBorneTheBattle, #DefendTheGIBill, and Medicinal Cannabis Research for Veterans.