



July 31, 2018

Dear Member of Congress:

I write to bring to your attention what could be this generation's Agent Orange – the exposure of our military personnel to airborne hazards from burn pits used to destroy human, medical, and other waste generated in the Iraq, Afghanistan, and other post-9/11 war zones.

As you may recall, I was privileged to serve for well over six years with America's sons and daughters in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the greater Middle East and Central Asia. That period included nearly four years in Iraq, culminating in service as Commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq during the Surge of 2007-2008, as Commander of US Central Command from 2008 through 2010, and as Commander of the International Security Assistance Force during the Surge in Afghanistan of 2010-2011. During those commands, I became increasingly concerned about the effects of burn pits and airborne toxins on our service members and civilians. I raised those concerns at the time and now, as a member of the boards of a number of veterans service organizations, I am raising them again as we see the effects of those exposures on a number of the selfless Americans who volunteered to serve our country at a time of war.

I know that you share the sense of obligation that virtually all Americans have to those who have stepped forward at a time of war. And it is with that in mind that I ask you to support the *Burn Pits Accountability Act* (S. 3181/H.R. 5671), which directs the Department of Defense to include during periodic health assessments and separation physical exams an evaluation of whether a service member has been exposed to burn pits or airborne toxins. If a service member reports being exposed, he or she will be enrolled in the Veterans Administration's Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry. Over time, this will increase the quantity of data that the VA can evaluate, better enabling it to determine the effect of burn pit exposure and to identify the most effective treatment for those affected.

With appreciation for your consideration of this request,

Sincerely,

*Thanks for your concern
for those who have
served our Nation at a
time of war.*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David H. Petraeus'.

David H. Petraeus
General, US Army (Ret.)
Member of the Board, Iraq and Afghanistan
Veterans of America