



June 13, 2022

NTU urges all Senators to vote “YES” on S. Amdt. 5048 to the Senate substitute to H.R. 3967, the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (Honoring our PACT Act). This amendment from Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) would very likely reduce the major spending and deficit impacts of the legislation, while still enabling the Veterans Affairs (VA) Department to assist veterans with service-connected medical conditions.

This week the Senate is set to vote on the Senate amendment to H.R. 3967, the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (Honoring our PACT Act) as well as a number of amendments offered by either side of the aisle.

As NTU has previously [noted](#), the Honoring our PACT Act does not include any offsets for up to \$285 billion in new spending. Under the Senate substitute amendment to H.R. 3967, veterans exposed to toxic substances in the line of duty would have expanded access to Veterans Affairs Department (VA) health care and disability compensation. The measure would expand the scope of acceptable presumptive illnesses and provide increased support for U.S. veterans through the VA’s continuum of care.

One of the amendments ([#5048](#)) under consideration is being offered by Sen. Lee and would correct an issue with the original language. The current language of the Honoring our PACT Act grants the VA Secretary the authority to remove a presumption of service connection for toxic exposure. However, [the bill](#) significantly limits this removal authority by stating that the “Secretary shall not consider the lack of a positive association between the disease and the toxic exposure” when removing a presumption. This means that the Secretary could not remove a presumption solely due to lack of medical evidence.

NTU understands that the federal government should be responsible for the care of our veterans experiencing a service-connected medical condition; however the federal government also has a responsibility to taxpayers to act as good stewards of the country’s purse strings. The Lee amendment is a step in the right direction to ensure taxpayers are only responsible for covering the cost of caring for diseases and illnesses that are positively associated with military service.

We believe that this amendment could have a significant impact on reducing the spending provided in this bill and thus reducing its impact on the deficit. NTU supports the passage of the Lee Amendment and encourages all senators to vote YES.

Roll call votes on S. Admt. 5048 to the Senate substitute to H.R. 3967 will be included in NTU’s annual Rating of Congress and a “YES” vote will be considered the pro-taxpayer position.

If you have any questions, please contact NTU Policy and Government Affairs Manager Alex Milliken at amillikenz@ntu.org.

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