IMMEDIATE RELEASE	February 6, 2019	No. 19-4 Mokie Porter 301-996-0901

Alfred Procopio, Jr., v. Robert Wilkie: What Does This Mean for You?

(Washington, D.C.)--On January 29, in a 9-2 decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled in favor of the veteran in *Alfred Procopio, Jr., v. Robert Wilkie,* finding the intent of Congress in the *Agent Orange Act of 1991* was to extend benefits to *all* veterans who served within the territorial waters of Vietnam.

The VA has 90 days from the Court's ruling to appeal this decision to the Supreme Court; and VA Secretary Wilkie has yet to announce how it plans to respond.

In the meantime, VVA recommends those veterans who think they may have served on a vessel in Vietnam's territorial waters reach out to their local Veterans Service Officer to file VA Form 21-0966, Intent to File a Claim. If VVA is your representative, please go to Service Officer Locator on www.vva.org to find your local representative. If you do not wish to work with a service officer, you may fill out the VA Form 21-0966 form and submit it to the VA.

We recommend Blue Water Navy veterans submit the VA Form 21-0966 if they have never filed an Agent Orange claim or if they have been denied an Agent Orange claim. If you are a spouse of a Blue Water Navy veteran who died from an Agent Orange-related illness, we recommend you also file a VA Form 21-0966.

By submitting VA Form 21-0966, you preserve your effective date. You have one year from the day you submitted your VA Form 21-0966 to submit your claim for benefits. By submitting this form, you will be putting yourself in the best possible position while waiting to see how the VA responds to the Court's decision.

To help your claim's success, we recommend you start gathering evidence such as deck logs, service records, or anything else that could help prove the location of your vessel. We will keep you updated on suggested next steps as we continue to learn more information.

--30--