



PRESS RELEASE

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VVA Applauds Swift Action of VA Secretary in Adding Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism to list Agent Orange-recognized Diseases

(Washington, D.C.) --“VVA applauds VA Secretary Denis [McDonough for his decision](#) to immediately implement provisions of the *William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021* (Public Law 116-283) by adding bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism to the list of conditions presumptively service connected to Agent Orange,” said John Rowan, VVA National President.

“We are grateful for Secretary McDonough’s swift action, as called for in [VVA’s May 24 letter](#), in accelerating these veterans’ long-overdue benefits,” noted Rowan. “Vietnam veterans have been severely affected by these diseases for years without desperately needed healthcare and compensatory relief. For these veterans, presumptive service connection not only means receiving disability compensation, but also entitlement to life-saving VA medical care.”

Additionally, Secretary McDonough announced VA will apply the provisions of court orders related to *Nehmer v. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, which may result in an earlier date for entitlement to benefits for Vietnam veterans and their survivors, who had previously filed and were denied benefits for one of these three new presumptive conditions. These veterans will have their cases automatically reviewed without the need to refile a claim, and the VA will send letters to impacted Veterans and survivors.

“Too many of our fellow Vietnam veterans have gone to their graves waiting for just this, for their government to do the right thing and grant service-connection for exposure to Agent Orange and other rainbow agents,” said Rowan. “History will reflect that at the very end of our days, President Biden was our savior, because his Secretary of Veterans Affairs made the moral and ethical decision to keep faith with dying veterans and acted with alacrity to ensure that our nation finally delivered on its promise to care for us who have borne the battle.”

Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is the nation’s only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated to the needs of Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA’s founding principle is “Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.”