

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4384

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to address exposure by members of the Armed Forces to toxic substances at Karshi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 30, 2020

Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to address exposure by members of the Armed Forces to toxic substances at Karshi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “K2 Veterans Advocacy
5 Act of 2020”.

1 **SEC. 2. STUDY ON EXPOSURE BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED**
2 **FORCES TO TOXICANTS AT KARSHI-**
3 **KHANABAD AIR BASE IN UZBEKISTAN.**

4 (a) AGREEMENT AND STUDY.—Not later than 60
5 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
6 retary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into an agreement
7 with the Administrator of the Agency for Toxic Sub-
8 stances and Disease Registry for the Administrator to
9 complete, not later than two years after the date of the
10 enactment of this Act, a study to identify and assess any
11 causation or correlation between—

12 (1) exposure to toxicants at the Karshi-
13 Khanabad (K2) Air Base in Uzbekistan during the
14 period beginning on October 7, 2001, and ending on
15 November 21, 2005; and

16 (2) incidents of cancer and other diseases or ill-
17 nesses experienced by individuals who were members
18 of the Armed Forces during the period described in
19 paragraph (1) and exposed to toxicants as described
20 in such paragraph.

21 (b) ELEMENTS.—The study conducted under sub-
22 section (a) shall include the following:

23 (1) An assessment regarding the conditions of
24 Karshi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan, during the
25 period beginning on October 1, 2001, and ending on
26 December 31, 2005, including an identification of

1 toxic substances contaminating the Air Base during
2 such period.

3 (2) An epidemiological study of the health con-
4 sequences of individuals who were members of the
5 Armed Forces deployed to the Air Base during such
6 period.

7 (c) SUPPORT FOR STUDY.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide
9 the Administrator with assistance in carrying out
10 the study required by subsection (a), including by
11 gathering such information as the Administrator
12 may consider useful in carrying out the study, in-
13 cluding environmental sampling data relative to any
14 location included in the study.

15 (2) OBTAINING INFORMATION CONCERNING EX-
16 POSURE.—Assistance under paragraph (1) provided
17 by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall include
18 compiling information on exposure described in sub-
19 section (a)(1) and any head of a Federal department
20 or agency with information concerning such expo-
21 sure, including the Secretary of Defense, shall pro-
22 vide the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with such in-
23 formation concerning such exposure as the Secretary
24 of Veterans Affairs considers appropriate for pur-
25 poses of the study required by subsection (a).

1 (d) REPORT.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years
3 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
4 retary shall submit to the appropriate committees of
5 Congress a report on the matters covered by the
6 study completed under subsection (a).

7 (2) CONTENTS.—The report required by para-
8 graph (1) shall include the following:

9 (A) The findings of the Administrator with
10 respect to the study completed under subsection
11 (a).

12 (B) A description of—

13 (i) the benefits administered by the
14 Secretary that a veteran may be eligible to
15 receive by reason of being exposed to toxic
16 substances at Karshi-Khanabad Air Base,
17 Uzbekistan, while serving in the Armed
18 Forces; and

19 (ii) the outreach conducted by the
20 Secretary to inform such veterans of such
21 benefits.

22 (3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS
23 DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appro-
24 priate committees of Congress” means—

1 (A) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs
2 and the Committee on Armed Services of the
3 Senate; and

4 (B) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs
5 and the Committee on Armed Services of the
6 House of Representatives.

7 (e) INCLUSION OF UZBEKISTAN IN CERTAIN REG-
8 ISTRIES AND PROGRAMS.—Section 201(c)(2) of the Dig-
9 nified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement
10 Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–260; 38 U.S.C. 527 note)
11 is amended, in the matter preceding subparagraph (A),
12 by striking “Afghanistan or Iraq” and inserting “Afghani-
13 stan, Iraq, or Uzbekistan”.

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