

Senate Joint Resolution No. 23

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 94

Senate Joint Resolution No. 23—Relative to veterans.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 11, 2006.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 23, Chesbro. Veterans' Right to Know Act.

This measure would urge the House of Representatives to support and pass the Veterans' Right to Know Act (H.R. 4259), which creates a commission to bring relief to veterans involved in Project 112 and the Shipboard Hazard and Defense Project (Project SHAD) and other instances of chemical or biological testing.

WHEREAS, Between 1962 and 1974 the Department of Defense carried out Project 112 and the Shipboard Hazard and Defense Project (Project SHAD), chemical and biological warfare testing projects, until President Nixon halted all biochemical testing; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense acknowledges that 134 tests were planned and 50 executed. Nineteen of these tests were conducted at sea, primarily in the South Pacific and off the coast of Hawaii, and 31 were conducted on land, in Hawaii, the Panama Canal Zone, and Alaska; and

WHEREAS, The tests were conducted on approximately 6,000 unknowing American military personnel, who, during these tests, were exposed to a variety of biological and chemical agents. Most of these tests used simulants, like *Bacillus globigii*, whose molecular structure is similar to anthrax. Some tests, however, used "hot" agents, like VX nerve gas, Sarin gas, Q Fever, and tularemia; and

WHEREAS, While some knowledge has been gained about the tests since they became public knowledge, key pieces of information are still being withheld, including the dosage levels involved and the identities of the exposed veterans; and

WHEREAS, In an effort to fully understand the extent of these tests and to provide exposed veterans with proper medical care, United States Representatives Mike Thompson and Denny Rehberg have introduced the Veterans' Right to Know Act (H.R. 4259); and

WHEREAS, The Veterans' Right to Know Act creates a 10-member, bipartisan commission to investigate the chemical or biological warfare tests carried out under Project 112 and Project SHAD and related tests and to provide full notification through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to those veterans exposed to the tests so that they may

receive medical treatment and any potential service-related disability compensation; and

WHEREAS, The Veterans' Right to Know Act has received the endorsement of a variety of veterans' service organizations, including the American Legion, the Blinded Veterans Association, the Disabled American Veterans, the Military Officers Association of America, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Vietnam Veterans of America; and

WHEREAS, In the words of Vietnam Veterans of America National President, the Veterans' Right to Know Act will "bring the first true measure of justice to potentially tens of thousands of veterans who were subject to toxic exposures in the performance of their military duties"; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California respectfully urges the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States to support and pass the Veterans' Right to Know Act to bring relief to veterans involved in Project 112 and Project SHAD and other instances of chemical or biological testing; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to each Representative in the Congress of the United States.