

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 5

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 26

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 5—Relative to the Gulf War Syndrome.

[Filed with Secretary of State April 23, 1997.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 5, Havice. Gulf War Syndrome.

This measure would memorialize the President and Congress of the United States to continue efforts to ensure that veterans of the Gulf War are appropriately cared for, to do everything possible to understand and explain Gulf War illnesses, to put into place those military doctrines, personnel, and medical policies, procedures, and equipment that will minimize any future problems from exposure to biological or chemical agents or other environmental hazards, and to use all means necessary to ensure that Gulf War veterans who placed themselves in harm's way on behalf of all Americans, are provided the assistance, support, and care they deserve.

WHEREAS, The debate surrounding the impacts of chemical weapon agents and the Gulf War Syndrome are both overdue and have not been far-reaching enough; and

WHEREAS, The White House, Congress, and the Department of Defense struggle to understand the enigmatic illnesses troubling our Gulf War veterans; and

WHEREAS, The basic question of whether the illnesses experienced by troops serving in the Gulf War were the result of some specific and unusual exposure related to that service has not been answered conclusively; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense has confirmed that American forces had been in the presence of Iraqi chemical munitions at Khamisiyah, a weapons storage site destroyed by American forces at the end of the war, and that exposure was possible; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense, in cooperation with the CIA and other agencies, are conducting extensive investigations, reaching out to more than 20,000 service personnel who may have been in the vicinity of Khamisiyah at the time of the possible release of chemical agents; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense has committed to continue efforts to investigate this incident, and any similar incidents that are identified, and spare no resource in this effort; and

WHEREAS, The Pentagon is seeking proposals on studies focusing on the impact of low-level exposure to chemical weapons and has earmarked \$10 million for the study; and

WHEREAS, The Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans Illnesses established by President Clinton on May 26, 1995, has released its final report calling for continued and extensive investigation and study of this issue; and

WHEREAS, Nobel Prize winning geneticist, Dr. Joshua Lederberg, may revise the findings of his investigation into veterans' claims regarding Gulf War Syndrome, because of new information; and

WHEREAS, The Pentagon and Congress of the United States are attempting to limit research to approximately two years to identify problems in connection with Gulf War Syndrome; and

WHEREAS, The California Legislature finds this action unacceptable and therefore supports continued research to address this extremely serious problem; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California respectfully memorializes the President and Congress to continue efforts to ensure that veterans of the Gulf War are appropriately cared for, to do everything possible to understand and explain Gulf War illnesses, to put into place those military doctrines, personnel, and medical policies, procedures, and equipment that will minimize any future problems from exposure to biological or chemical agents or other environmental hazards, and to use all means necessary to ensure that Gulf War veterans who placed themselves in harms way on behalf of all Americans are provided the assistance, support, and care they deserve; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

