DAV applauds passage of landmark toxic exposure legislation

Today, the nation took one more step in keeping our promise to America’s veterans impacted by toxic exposures. With the historic and bipartisan Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022 now signed into law, veterans of multiple generations will have expanded VA benefits and health care if they were exposed to toxic substances.

Among its many provisions, the Honoring Our PACT Act will expand health care eligibility to Post-9/11 veterans exposed to burn pits; add 23 new diseases to the VA’s list of service presumptions for burn pit exposure; expand Agent Orange exposure presumptions to seven other countries and territories outside of Vietnam.

The law will also establish a new framework for future presumptions of service connection for toxic exposures, ensuring veterans in the years ahead will benefit from its passage along with strengthening federal research into toxic exposure.

Simply put, the bill represents the largest expansion of VA care and benefits for those exposed to harmful substances during their military service in history.

Today is DAV’s culmination of years’ work in advancing, advocating and eventually getting this crucial bill to the president’s desk. We thank Senators Jon Tester of Montana and
Jerry Moran of Kansas for their leadership in turning this bill into law, as well as Representatives Mark Takano of California and Mike Bost of Illinois.

With this outstanding bill now law, it falls to DAV to ensure the VA faithfully and quickly implements the legislation guaranteeing wounded, ill and injured veterans exposed to harmful materials the benefits they have already earned.