

By Senator Burgess

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Senate Resolution

A resolution honoring and recognizing the victims of Agent Orange during the Vietnam War.

WHEREAS, our nation was founded by individuals willing to sacrifice their personal safety to ensure our collective freedom, and the Sunshine State is proud to be home to many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty, and

WHEREAS, throughout our history, United States citizens have been called upon to take up arms against the enemies of this great nation, risking their lives and leaving their loved ones behind to honorably safeguard the freedoms and liberties guaranteed to all Americans, and

WHEREAS, more than eight million Americans honorably served during the Vietnam War, during which time Agent Orange was widely used by the United States Armed Forces as part of the herbicidal warfare program, Operation Ranch Hand, from 1962 through 1971, and

WHEREAS, Florida is home to more than 423,000 Vietnam-era veterans, and

WHEREAS, nearly 20 million gallons of Agent Orange were sprayed over Vietnam from helicopters and aircraft, destroying vegetation and crops to deprive enemy forces of food and cover and exposing approximately 2.6 million American soldiers to this herbicide and defoliant chemical, and

WHEREAS, Agent Orange is a dioxin and cancer-causing chemical that enters the body through physical contact or ingestion, attacks human genes, and causes numerous serious

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30 illnesses, including various forms of cancer, heart disease, and  
31 other debilitating conditions, and

32 WHEREAS, Agent Orange exposure has also resulted in genetic  
33 damage, with some children and grandchildren of exposed veterans  
34 born with spina bifida and other abnormalities, and

35 WHEREAS, today, only 800,000 Vietnam veterans exposed to  
36 Agent Orange are alive, with approximately 300 deaths occurring  
37 among them every day, and

38 WHEREAS, while fallen comrades are memorialized on The Wall  
39 at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., those  
40 veterans who are victims of Agent Orange are not recognized as  
41 casualties of the Vietnam War, and

42 WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that we honor these  
43 veterans to the fullest extent of our ability, as they have made  
44 untold and innumerable sacrifices to preserve the liberties that  
45 we enjoy today and that future generations will continue to  
46 cherish, NOW, THEREFORE,

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48 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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50 That we honor and recognize the victims of Agent Orange during  
51 the Vietnam War for their courageous service to our nation as  
52 some of America's most heroic citizens.

53 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be  
54 presented to the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs and the  
55 United States Department of Veterans Affairs as a tangible token  
56 of the sentiments expressed herein.