



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-1600

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15 APR 1994

The Honorable Ronald V. Dellums
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This responds to your request for the views of the Department of Defense on H.R. 1055, 103d Congress, a bill "To direct the Secretary of Defense to issue a commendation to each individual exposed to mustard agents during World War II, and for other purposes."

H.R. 1055 would require the Secretary of Defense to issue a commendation to individuals exposed to mustard agents during World War II, and to notify these individuals of their exposure, the possible health effects of the exposure, and the options available to them for medical treatment for health effects resulting from the exposure. Further, if the bill were enacted the Secretary of Defense would be required to make available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs any information regarding exposure to include the names of the individuals.

We fully support H.R. 1055. We do caution, however, that given the many years that have passed since some of these activities were carried out, and the format and dispersion of the records, it may not be possible for us fully to identify and notify all participants. In spite of the above obstacles, the Department of Defense is committed to doing everything possible to support the bill's provisions. We continue to pursue the review of records and we are determined to make as complete and thorough a review as possible and to share our findings with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that, from the standpoint of the Administration's program, there is no objection to the presentation of this report for the consideration of the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. W. Preston".

Stephen W. Preston
Acting General Counsel