



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON

January 17, 2019

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
DEMOCRATIC STAFF

The Honorable Jon Tester  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Tester:

Thank you for your March 6, 2018, letter to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regarding Agent Orange presumptive conditions. I apologize for the delayed response.

I continue to review the VA working group recommendations previously made to then-Secretary Shulkin which followed the publication of the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) report in 2016.

You will be also interested to know that my VA subject matter experts have begun a formal, deliberative review of the latest update to NAM's consensus report, Veterans and Agent Orange Volume 11 (published November 2018). The timeline for this review and any presumption decision is expected to extend to this summer.

In addition, we expect as early as mid-2019 to have some published results from the Vietnam Era Health Retrospective Observational Study. This study surveyed Vietnam Veterans, non-deployed Vietnam-era Veterans, and U.S. civilians to compare the prevalence of various diseases. The results of both efforts are expected to provide a better understanding of the issue and support a more informed decision. VA will also soon be starting work on a Vietnam-era mortality study.

Should you have any questions, please have a member of your staff contact Ms. Jennifer Janowski, Congressional Relations Officer, at (202) 461-0621 or by email at [Jennifer.Janowski@va.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Janowski@va.gov). A similar letter was sent to Chairman Isakson

Thank you for your continued support of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert L. Wilkie".

Robert L. Wilkie