

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONGRESSMAN JAMES MOYLAN SET TO INTRODUCE RADIATION EXPOSURE
COMPENSATION ACT (RECA) AMENDMENT TO THE NDAA**

(Washington D.C.) The Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) is set to expire on June 7, 2024. The collective efforts have been focused on passing S. 3853, Senator Josh Hawley's Radiation Exposure Compensation Reauthorization Act (RECRA), which would extend and expand the existing RECA program to include Guam. This would be unprecedented, as downwinders from Guam, who were affected by the Castle Bravo nuclear tests on Bikini Atoll, have never been considered or compensated for radiation exposure. This legislation would finally fix a long-standing injustice by including them.

Also included in the expansion legislation are compensation for those impacted by the dumping of Manhattan Project waste in Missouri, Tennessee, Alaska, and Kentucky. The fallout from these tests infected many people in these jurisdictions, including Guam, who now have leukemia and other forms of cancer as a result. They are faced with rising medical bills because of careless actions by the federal government. Sadly, many continue to suffer through the pain of chemotherapy and other complications, while several others have also passed away over the years. As of now, there is still uncertainty surrounding S. 3853. While there have been discussions and debates, no concrete decision has been made regarding a vote on the bill. The reluctance revolves around the identification in funding, which is estimated to be in the billions.

Due to RECA's expiration just days away, House leadership needs to move quickly to extend and expand RECA and provide critical relief to individuals and families affected by toxic air pollution. However, if the efforts are not successful by June 7, 2024, the fight for downwinders will continue regardless, as Congressman James Moylan (Guam) submitted a bipartisan RECA expansion amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This will be addressed next week in session. The amendment is co-sponsored by Representatives Teresa Leger Fernández (NM-03), Ann Wagner (MO-02), Gabe Vasquez (NM-02), Greg Stanton (AZ-04), Ruben Gallego (AZ-03), Melanie Stansbury (NM-01), Cori Bush (MO-01), and Dina Titus (NV-01).

"Delaying compensation for radiation exposure has severe consequences for those affected. It not only prolongs the suffering and financial burden of individuals and their families, but it also perpetuates the injustice and neglect towards the victims. Furthermore, the delay undermines trust in the government's commitment to righting past wrongs and providing justice for all citizens. Ensuring that those who have been affected by radiation exposure are properly compensated is of the utmost importance, and I'm working with various offices across the aisle to request that leadership prioritize the vote on the expansion bill for the RECA and push for its passage. If not, at least support the efforts through the amendment in the NDAA. We will continue this fight until the job gets done," said Rep. James Moylan (GU-00).

"With RECA expiring this weekend, we urge House Republican Leadership to allow members to vote on our bipartisan NDAA amendment to extend and expand the program," said Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (NM-03). ***"A coalition of members from Guam to New Mexico, from Arizona to Missouri, stand united in asking the Speaker to let us vote to compensate our communities for the harm they've suffered before any more victims die. The time for justice is now."***

"This important amendment will help Missourians and others impacted by our nation's World War II nuclear program get the support and compensation they justly deserve. I urge its consideration on the Floor," said Rep. Ann Wagner (MO-02).

"The Radiation Exposure Compensation Program is an essential resource for the tens of thousands of service members, scientists, uranium workers, and downwind civilians who have developed cancers linked to our nation's nuclear testing program. While these tests took place primarily in Nevada, RECA payments have been made to individuals in every state and territory. The extension of this program is the least we can do to compensate those Cold Warriors whose sacrifices ensured our national security," said Rep. Dina Titus (NV-01).

"With RECA just days away from expiring, it is critical that Congress takes action to expand this program for the thousands of radiation-exposed Arizonans who still do not have access to the benefits they are owed. I am proud to support this amendment to do just that," said Rep. Ruben Gallego (AZ-03).

"The vestiges of World War II continues to kill people in my district and beyond, specifically the toxic radioactive waste dumped in our communities by the Manhattan Project. Today, the House failed to bring forward any extension or expansion of this vital program that compensates the victims of radioactive waste," said Rep. Cori Bush (MO-01). ***"In the absence of a vote on the senate-passed bill, I am proud to support this amendment to the NDAA that would extend and expand RECA. It prioritizes helping victims of war, rather than fueling it."***

"For decades, too many New Mexicans have suffered the effects of radiation exposure from testing and uranium mining and have been denied the justice they rightfully deserve. I'm proud to offer an amendment with Rep. Moylan to extend and expand the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to ensure that New Mexicans receive their overdue compensation," said Rep. Gabe Vasquez (NM-02). ***"This is a harm done by the federal government, that should be fixed by the federal government. I will continue to fight to pass this critical legislation and provide much-needed relief to all those who have faced, and continue to face, the consequences of our nation's nuclear weapons program."***

"Expanding RECA is a human rights and environmental justice issue," said Rep. Melanie Stansbury (NM-01). ***"We must do everything we can to ensure the expanded version of RECA passes and is implemented so that communities in New Mexico, like those in the Tularosa Basin, and across the country can receive the care and compensation they deserve."***

Congressman Moylan's office is working with various offices to coordinate a virtual press conference with the media to address the issue and outline the actions for the coming days and weeks. Additional information will soon be provided for local media to participate.

END OF STATEMENT