Approved: 4-9-97
Date

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS.

The meeting was called to order by Senator Lana Oleen at 11:10 a.m. on March 5, 1997 in Room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present: Mary Galligan, Legislative Research Department

Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Midge Donohue, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Senator Anthony Hensley Representative Dan Thimesch

Mr. Jim Bunker, Disabled American Veterans, Topeka

Mrs. Wendy Henault, Topeka Mrs. Francine Hines, President, Association of the United States Army,

Topeka

Commander Halsey Hines (Ret. US Navy), Topeka

Chief Warrant Officer Rosanna Morrow, President, Topeka Chapter of

the Association of the United States Army

R. W. Trewyn, Ph.D., Associate Vice Provost for Research, Kansas State

University, Manhattan

Mr. Stu Entz, Attorney, Topeka

Others attending: See attached list

Senator Oleen explained that two bills relating to the same subject would be heard by the committee today. She asked the conferees to speak to both issues and opened the hearings on:

SB 297: An act concerning the Kansas commission on veterans affairs; relating to Persian Gulf War syndrome

An act concerning the Kansas commission on veterans affairs; relating to Persian Gulf War syndrome HB 2108:

Senator Anthony Hensley, a sponsor of SB 297, told the committee that his bill and HB 2108 were identical when introduced, but the House added several amendments to the House version when it worked the bill. He said Representative Thimesch had been working on this issue for the last couple of years, and that he had told Representative Thimesch he would introduce legislation on the Senate side in support of the issue. Senator Hensley indicated he felt it was important to bring attention to the Gulf War syndrome and he felt that, since the House version had been passed, it would be the appropriate vehicle for the committee to work because it sends an important message that the State of Kansas needs to get involved. Senator Hensley stated that he supports HB 2108 in its current form and asked the committee to report if favorably.

Representative Dan Thimesch, a sponsor of HB 2108, discussed the need for this legislation, referencing page 2 of his written testimony (Attachment #1) He told the committee the bill was fashioned after Ohio legislation, and he listed ten things the bill was designed to accomplish. A ten-minute video of an ABC Nightline presentation on the Persian Gulf War featuring Ted Kopel was shown by Representative Thimesch. Representative Thimesch said the Gulf War illness was a serious problem facing Kansas; it is crippling families. He encouraged the committee to favorably report HB 2108 to help the more than 13,900 Kansans that went to the Gulf.

Mr. Jim Bunker, Disabled American Veterans, Topeka, addressed the committee in support of HB 2108

# **CONTINUATION SHEET**

MINUTES OF THE SENATE FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, Room 254-E- of the Capitol, at 11:00 a.m. on March 5, 1997.

(Attachment #2). Mr. Bunker, a disabled Gulf War veteran who served with the Big Red One from Fort Riley, told the committee he became ill in the Gulf and has been sick ever since. Bunker related that he was given untested and unproved drugs and exposed to petro-chemicals, nerve and mustard gas. He pointed out that there is no way to tracks veterans of other conflicts who were exposed to various chemicals, such as Agent Orange, and the effect on them and their families, and he asked the committee to support **HB 2108** which would establish a state registry and survey of Gulf War veterans so the same thing would not happen to them and their families as what occurred in previous conflicts.

Mrs. Wendy Henault, Topeka, the wife of a Gulf War veteran, addressed the committee in support of **HB** 2108 (Attachment #3). She told about their first child who was born with multiple birth defects and diagnosed with Goldenhar Syndrome, a birth defect linked to babies born to Gulf War veterans. She stated that neither she nor her husband have a history of birth defects in their families and spoke of their frustration in their search for answers. Mrs. Henault told the committee that, as a result of a media story on their plight, the Henaults heard from other families of Gulf War veterans who were experiencing various symptoms. She said **HB** 2108 would provide for registry which could be used to collect data to document birth defects and/or illnesses related to the Gulf War syndrome.

Mrs. Francine Hines, Topeka, President of the Association of the United States Army, spoke in support of HB 2108 (Attachment #4). She indicated she had testified in favor of the bill before the House Committee and was appearing today to reaffirm her support of the provisions of SB 297. She acknowledged that answers were not available to the existing problems affecting veterans who served in the Gulf and their families, but she felt she had an obligation to urge legislators to take the necessary steps to secure information in order to provide future adequate medical and financial support to those veterans. On behalf of the Association of the United States Army, Mrs. Hines urged the committee to favorably consider this legislation.

Halsey Hines, retired U. S. Navy Commander and a veteran of WW II and the Korean Conflict, addressed the committee in support of **HB 2108** (Attachment #5). Commander Hines recalled that, during his twenty-three years of service, it took months, even years, before the necessary steps were taken to provide the needed medical and financial support to veterans, and he stated the same is true for the Persian Gulf War veterans. He said the time for action is now and urged the committee to give favorable consideration to **HB 2108**.

Chief Warrant Officer Rosanna Morrow, President of the Topeka Chapter of the Association of the United States Army, spoke on behalf of military service members and their families in support of **SB 297** (Attachment #6). She said our soldiers had the courage to serve our country in the Persian Gulf, and that Kansans are now being asked to have the courage to provide initiatives and programs to support those whose health was affected.

R. W. Trewyn, Ph.D., Associate Vice Provost for Research, Kansas State University, Manhattan, appeared in support of HB 2108 (Attachment #7). Professor Trewyn told the committee that many who served America in the Persian Gulf War believe their needs are not being addressed by the federal government and do not know where to turn. He said HB 2108 could begin to remedy that problem for Kansas veterans. Dr. Trewyn cited the Iowa Persian Gulf Study Group findings which were recently published in the Journal of the American Medical Association which proposed that a variety of neurotoxin encountered by Gulf War soldiers may have led to the symptoms they now experience in civilian life. He discussed Kansas State University's involvement in research authorized by the Ohio Legislature in 1996 to examine the health, family, economic and employment outcomes affecting Ohio military veterans who served in Operation Desert Storm. Dr. Trewyn advised that analyses of the preliminary Ohio data indicated significant effects of Gulf War service on veterans' general health, reproductive health, and divorce/separation rates. He pointed out that health problems can affect family relationships, income, employment and a host of other areas and issues. He said that HB 2108 proposes an enlightened and comprehensive approach to evaluating the impact of service in the Persian Gulf. Dr. Trewyn advised that gathering comparative data and creating a registry of those who served from the State of Kansas is an important first step toward doing what is fair and right for Kansas veterans.

Mr. Stu Entz, Topeka, a member of the State Committee for Employer's Support of the Guard and Reserve and Past Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee of the Kansas Chamber of Commerce and Industry, spoke in support of SB 297 (Attachment #8) Mr. Entz pointed out that Operation Desert Storm was unique in that it brought back the specter of chemical warfare, and he pointed out that men and women who served in the Guard and Reserves were there and some suffer unexplained problems similar in nature to others who also served.

There were no opponents to the measures. Dr. Steven Potsic of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, who was scheduled to provide information on the issue, was rescheduled for a later date.

Additional written testimony in support of the bills:

# **CONTINUATION SHEET**

MINUTES OF THE SENATE FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, Room 254-E- of the Capitol, at 11:00 a.m. on March 5, 1997.

Mr. Don A. Myer, Executive Director of the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs (Attachment #9)

Ralph Snyder, Assistant Adjutant, Kansas American Legion (Attachment #10) Mr. Arthur W. Solis, American GI Forum of Kansas, Olathe (Attachment #11)

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon. The next meeting is scheduled for March 6, 1997.

# SENATE FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: 3-5-97

NAME	REPRESENTING	
Jim Bunker	Gulf Vets of DAV -	
TK Shively	YAMSAS LEGAL SErvices	
Sky Ente	citizeers	
Halsey Hines	military Order of World Ways	<b>-</b>
Francisco Huis	State Pres. assoc, of the U.S. Grmy	11
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Chuck Budahl	Adjutant General's Dept.	O
Frank Tommass	VFW 1650	
Wendy Genault	Children of Gulf War Vets.	
Ron Trewyn	KSU	_
Ron Trewyn COL BOD DALTON	KS ARMY NAT GUARD	
SGM Randy Frederick	KS Army NAT Guard	
JEFF LAWSON	LEGLAISON KS VIW	,
Bessie aller	KS ADY Comen On the pain At	Fairs
Lina Dela Rasa	KS Ady Can On Hisp. Affair	
Andel Bricher	citizens	
Mary Elizabeth Kasper	Citzens	
Steve I Cox & Family	Citzens	
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# SENATE FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: 3-5-97

	parameter 1
NAME	REPRESENTING
Risa Meyer	& Gov. Consulting
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DAN THIMESCH
REPRESENTATIVE, 93RD DISTRICT
30121 WEST 63RD STREET SOUTH
CHENEY, KANSAS 67025
(316) 531-2995

STATE CAPITOL

ROOM 278-W

TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1504

(913) 296-7680

1-800-432-3924

(DURING SESSION)



AGRICULTURE EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thank you Senator Oleen and the Senate Federal and State Committee.

We have a serious problem facing Kansas today. It is called Gulf War illness. It is crippling some of our families in Kansas.

Our soldiers that went to the Gulf were in excellent health. They were in the best physical condition and had the best training they could receive. Many of them didn't come back the same. Symptoms and unexplained illnesses have plagued these young men and women. We are also seeing some spouses family members and offspring having problems.

What really happened over there? Did our soldiers and support personnel become exposed to something bad? Some have expressed concern about the thousands of chemical alarms going off after the air war started. We leveled chemical warehouse facilities.

How about the oil well fires, with the dense smoke and an assumption the Saddam Hussein ordered chemicals to be thrown onto the fires! Maybe it was the pills (PB) that many soldiers were forced to take, they were not approved by the FDA. Or could it have been the anthrax shots, depleted uranium, flea collars, pesticides, etc. Whatever caused these young soldiers and their families to become ill, is not going away.

The Pentagon and the Department of Defense have not acted in good faith. They have dragged their feet until there is very little confidence left in the Federal Government. Three United States Senators, Regal, Rockefeller, and Shay have expressed their shock, anger and disappointment as to how this issue has been handled and have strongly criticized the Department of Defense and the Pentagon.

I believe because of all the pressure, the Federal Government is now making "grant monies" available for states to do their own research. There are millions of dollars available for the states to accomplish this.

I strongly encourage you to support HB 2108 and help the more than 13,900 Kansans that went to the Gulf. They went to protect our freedoms and interests.

Let us not forget these brave Kansans. Let us be supportive of our soldiers and families now when they need our help.

Sen. Federal & State Affairs Comm. Date: 3-5-97
Attachment: #1

# HOUSE BILL NO. 2108

### The Commission shall:

- Develop comprehensive surveys to determine the physical and mental problems experienced by veterans, their spouses, and their family members, including birth defects, employment problems and social and family problems.
- ° Contact families of any children born after Augist 1, 1991 who are on any state birth defect list to determine whether either of the two biological parents served in the Gulf War. If so, the child's name shall be listed in a registry.
- Request that all health programs of the state, ask all participants in such programs, whether they are Gulf War veterans. If so, they shall complete a survey.
- Establish the registry listing the names of persons who have been affected.
- Request the different <u>media</u> to make <u>public service</u> announcements publicizing information on the surveys and inform Kansans of the health problems and places where help is available.
- ° Inform veterans of any programs to meet the veterans' needs.
- Establish a full time position dedicated to seeKing grants and other moneys to fund activities under this act.
- All moneys received from any grants shall be deposited in the state treasury, and credited to the Persian Gulf War veterans health initiative fund.
- Conduct a <u>fiscal impact study</u>, aimed at identifying the annual budgetary impact of Gulf War syndrome on Kansas in terms of increased costs of education, medical coverage, correction of birth defects and other expenses identified through the results of the surveys.
- <sup>o</sup> Cooperate and share information with appropriate state and federal agencies as necessary for the purpose of this act to aid veterans and other persons in obtaining aid and relief from the effects of Gulf War syndrome

KANS STATE UNIVERSITY

News Sc. vices
9 Anderson Hall

Manhattan, Kansas 66506-0117

(913) 532-6415

FAX: 913-532-6418

e-mail: news@ksu.ksu.edu

Embargoed until Wednesday, April 17, 1996

# CHEMICAL COMBINATION COULD BE CAUSE OF GULF WAR SYNDROME.

MANHATTAN -- Researchers cooperating at three universities might have discovered the cause of the wide array of symptoms reported by an estimated 30,000 Gulf War veterans.

In the study done with chickens, researchers found that chemicals used simultaneously to protect soldiers from insect-borne diseases and nerve-gas poisoning are highly toxic to the central nervous system.

Fred Oehme, professor of toxicology at Kansas State University's College of Veterinary Medicine, teamed with Mohamed Abou-Donia, a pharmacologist from Duke University Medical Center, and Tom Kurt, a toxicologist from University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, in the study.

The research shows that two pesticides widely used by Desert Storm soldiers. DEET and permethrin, and the anti-nerve gas agent pyridostigmine bromide, when combined, produced many of the same neurological defects in chickens as those reported by stricken Desert Storm veterans. When used alone, the same chemical agents were harmless.

The findings were presented during a poster session at the annual meeting of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology on Wednesday. The research will be published by Abou-Donia, Kenneth R. Wilmarth, Ali A. Abdel-Rahman, Karl F. Jensen, Oehme and Kurt in May in the Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health.

Soldiers were given DEET and permethrin sprays to protect themselves from the various desert insects and the diseases they could carry, said Oehme. "Soldiers were spraying themselves several times a day. The insecticides would stick to their bodies and clothing. Some soldiers sprayed their blankets and clothes with permethrin."

This means some soldiers were constantly surrounded by the chemicals.

"Even if they weren't spraying themselves, which would have been unusual, these insecticides permeated the environment, like second-hand smoke," Oehme said.

The soldiers would administer the third chemical, pyridostigmine bromide, to themselves whenever a nerve-gas detector sounded a warning. In some areas these detectors could go off several times a day so soldiers were exposing themselves to the anti-nerve-gas agent often, Oehme said.

"Just like everyone, each individual soldier reacts to chemicals differently," Oehme said. "The biochemical processes of some soldiers can handle more chemicals than others."

In the study, researchers exposed healthy chickens to DEET, permethrin and pyridostigmine bromide alone and then in different combinations. Veterinary toxicologist Oehme advised the other researchers on the right doses of the three chemicals and the exposure methods for the chickens.

"Chickens are much smaller than people obviously, but their susceptibility to neurotoxic chemicals closely resembles humans," he said. "We wanted to find the right dosages that we could repeatedly administer and still observe the clinical effects over weeks."

Animals exposed to each chemical individually showed no signs of illness. Oehme said. But chickens exposed to any two chemical combinations showed similar symptoms to Gulf War veterans including diarrhea, weight loss.

shortness of breath, stumbling and tremors. Animals exposed to all three chemicals became paralyzed or in some cases d

Laboratory analysis of tissue from the chickens showed enlarged axons and axonal degeneration in the central and peripheral nervous systems. Axons are part of the nerve cell and make up most of the spinal cord.

The animal tissue showed that the myelin, tightly rolled layers of fat that protect nerve cells, was swelling, dissolving and in more serious cases, disappearing in the animal exposed to all three chemicals.

"Once myelin starts to dissolve it cannot be reversed," Oehme said. "The chemicals were destroying the enzymes that held the myelin together. The unprotected nerves then began to short circuit and not work properly."

This can lead to symptoms shown by both the experimental animals and the Desert Storm veterans.

Oehme made several visits to Duke University where the tests were being conducted and was in constant contact with the team regarding the results and what the next steps would be.

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Oehme can be reached until Wednesday at the Red Deer Lodge at 1-800-661-1657. He can be reached Thursday at his office (913) 532-4334.

Additional information is available through Rebecca Levine at Duke University at (919) 684-4148 or by e-mail at Levin005@mc.duke.edu and Kris Mullen at Southwestern at (214) 648-3404.

Prepared by Leigh Anne Nicholson. She can be reached at (913) 532-6415.



For Gott and Country

★ WASHINGTON OFFICE ★ 1608 "K" STREET, N.W. ★ WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006-2847 ★

(202) 861-2700 \*

# Memorandum

TO:

American Legion Department Service Officers

FROM:

Matthew L. Puglisi, Assistant Director for Gulf War Veterans

DATE:

July 19, 1996

RE:

Gulf War Undiagnosed Illness Disability Compensation

As I am sure you are aware, The American Legion Gulf War Task Force, The United States General Accounting Office, and the Department of Veterans Affairs have concluded that serious problems exist with Gulf War undiagnosed illness disability claims. Investigations conducted by all three have determined that most of the veterans who filed for this form of compensation were poorly served by VA.

One of the most significant problems with these claims is that our Service Officers are usually excluded from the processing of these claims. This occurs because the claims are not adjudicated at the Regional Offices, but at four Area Processing Offices (APOs). The Task Force is aggressively pushing VA to correct this problem, and once it does, future Gulf War claims will have the benefit of a service officer developing his or her claim before it is adjudicated. This solution, however, does not address the undiagnosed illness claims that were, and will continue to be, denied before the system is fixed.

The American Legion has an obligation to Gulf War veterans with American Legion Power of Attorney whose claims were denied because of VA's failures. At the very least, we should contact these veterans and determine how they are managing since the denial of their claim. If their claim was wrongly denied, we should actively pursue the reopening of their claim.

Enclosed please find a list of all veterans in your state who have filed a Gulf War undiagnosed illness claim with American Legion Power of Attorney. These claims have already been adjudicated by VA. Many of these veterans filed directly with VA, leaving you with no opportunity to affect the development of these claims before they were adjudicated. As we noted in our *Report to the National Commander*, 95% of these claims were denied by VA.

Also enclosed is a checklist that we developed so we can keep track of how successful The American Legion's efforts were in following up with this population of veterans. As you contact a veteran, and subsequently make a determination concerning your course of action, please fill out a form for each veteran and mail or fax it to us. We will collect all of the forms and issue periodic reports to the Legion's leadership, and the Department Service Officers.

I understand that this would create an added burden to your already heavy workload, but the Legion cannot stand idly by after it discovered the problems with these claims. Although we have set no time limit on investigating these denied claims, the sooner we could collect this information, the better.

Thank you for your support of this effort. If you have questions or concerns regarding this project, please do not hesitate to call me at (202) 861-2772.



# FACT SHEET - PERSIAN GULF WAR STUDY OF IOWA VETERANS

The University of Iowa College of Medicine, in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Public Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that Persian Gulf War military personnel from Iowa reported significantly higher rates of certain medical and psychiatric conditions than their counterparts in the military who were not deployed to the Persian Gulf. The results of this CDC funded study appear in the January 15, 1997 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Researchers found that in comparison with those who did not serve in the Gulf War, Gulf War military personnel from Iowa were more likely to report symptoms suggestive of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, chronic fatigue, cognitive dysfunction, bronchitis, asthma, fibromyalgia, alcohol abuse, anxiety disorder, and sexual discomfort. Investigators also found that service in the Persian Gulf War substantially affected the self-reported assessment of quality of life and functional health status. Among the Persian Gulf War veterans, researchers found relatively few differences between the frequency of medical and psychiatric conditions reported by National Guard or Reserve members and regular military personnel.

The purpose of the study was to compare the frequency of selfreported symptoms and illnesses between Gulf War military personnel and contemporary military personnel not deployed to the Persian Gulf. Since previous reports suggested that National Guard and Reserve troops might have more health problems than regular military personnel serving in the Persian Gulf, researchers also explored the relationship between self-reported medical and psychiatric conditions and type of military service. The health information gathered from this study was obtained from 3,700 randomly selected military personnel from Iowa who completed a telephone interview.

Because this study was a population-based epidemiological study, the types and frequency of self-reported health problems are probably similar in other populations of military personnel deployed to the Gulf. The researchers point out that the results of this study should not be over-interpreted. Findings from this study establish the need to further investigate the causes, clinical nature, and public health implications of the higher rates of self-reported health problems of the Persian Gulf War military personnel. More objective clinical measurement of these specific medical and psychiatric conditions should be addressed in future studies to determine what type of underlying illnesses, medical conditions, or other concerns might be related to these self-reported conditions.

CDC Office of Communication

January 3, 1997

# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS -- PERSIAN GULF WAR STUDY OF IOWA VETERANS

- o The study is one of the first population-based epidemiologic studies to document that Persian Gulf War veterans are reporting more medical and psychiatric conditions than their military peers who were not deployed to the Persian Gulf.
- o The study has identified several specific medical and psychiatric conditions that need to be studied in more detail.
- o The medical and psychiatric conditions identified in the study appear to have had a measurable impact on the functional activity and daily lives of Persian Gulf War veterans.
- o The medical and psychiatric conditions identified in the study may not be unique to Persian Gulf War and may be similar to the experience of veterans in other wars.
- o Among the Persian Gulf War veterans, minimal differences were observed between the National Guard or Reserve troops and the regular military personnel, indicating that all military personnel, regardless of military service, were affected by deployment to the Persian Gulf.

CDC Office of Communication

January 3, 1997

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Back to the Resource Center Home Page

# CIA Reports 120,000 Exposed to Nerve Gas

Facing the imminent release of a new book by a CIA whistle-blower, the Central Intelligence Agency made the following report on Friday, September 27, 1996. The following information is reproduced from New York Newsday.

# Computer Projects Sarin's Scope

By Patrick J. Sloyan. WASHINGTON BUREAU

Washington - A preliminary Central Intelligence Agency computer model shows that a plume of sarin nerve gas drifted over elements of seven U.S. Army divisions after American engineers blew up Iraqi munitions containing 4.8 tons of poison at the end of the 1991 gulf war, according to administration officials.

More than 130,000 troops were in these frontline units in southern Iraq and Kuwait that routed Saddam Hussein's army from Kuwait during the weeklong ground war. But U.S. officials say poor record-keeping by the Pentagon has prevented CIA analysts from making an accurate estimate of how many troops were exposed to the cloud of sarin that drifted more than 62 miles south from an Iraqi bunker complex called Khamisiyah.

"Their unit locator system is all screwed up," said one expert contributing to the CIA analysis. The Army divisions with the units involved include the 1st Mechanized Infantry, the 82nd Airborne, the 24th Mechanized Infantry, the 1st Cavalry, the 1st Armored, 2nd Armored and 3rd Armored.

Other support units made up of reserves and state national guards may also be affected, administration officials said.

Depending on the final computer analysis, the plume of sarin may have also passed over parts of the British 1st Infantry. According to one official, the cloud of sarin may have reached the Saudi Arabian border.

One senior Pentagon official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said a "very large" number of men and women were possibly exposed to low-levels of the nerve agent. The Pentagon is assembling a new task force to contact thousands of Desert Storm veterans about potential health problems.

Other defense officials expect the large number of troops possibly exposed to the March 10, 1991, plume of sarin will raise new questions about the possible link between the so-called gulf war syndrome and troop exposure to small amounts of chemical munitions. The Veterans Administration estimates more than 7,000 Desert Storm soldiers suffer from fatigue, sore joints, sleeplessness, stomach problems and rashes - symptoms of the syndrome, which still has not been medically identified.

Just last week, Defense Secretary William Perry's aides estimated that only 5,000 U.S. soldiers were potentially exposed after Army engineers destroyed munitions containing sarin on March 4 and March 10. But Kenneth Bacon, the Pentagon spokesman, warned reporters that the estimate was likely to grow.

Previously, CIA analysts showed that a cloud of sarin five miles wide drifted about 15 miles northeast, over a swamp, after engineers destroyed 1,060 Kaytusha rockets containing sarin on March 4.

## Hello

My name is Jim Bunker and I am a Gulf War veteran. I served with the Big Red One, from Ft. Riely Kansas. I became ill in the gulf and have been sick ever since. I do not know what made me or thousands of other gulf veterans sick. We were given untested and unproved drugs, exposed to petro-chemical for a very long time and many of us were even exposed to nerve and mustard gas. These are only some of things that the Department of Defense (DoD) has came forth on.

As it was said to the veterans of the atomic tests after W.W.II and the veterans from South East Asia with Agent Orange, we too are told that our exposure would not cause cancer or any birth defects. In this past year the Veterans Administration (VA) has listed at least four more health problem caused by agent orange. The VA also said the birth defect spina bifida is linked to services in the South East Asia. How many of these veterans and their family live in Kansas? I do not think any one knows, for the was never any registry on these veterans family members.

We can start now and prevent this from happening again. That is why I am asking for you to support and to pass House Bill 2108. This bill will set up a state registry and survey of these veterans and their family members. It will look for and point out any increases in birth defects.

Not if, but when the VA tells us that some birth defects are related to service in South West Asia, we as a state will be able to better inform our veterans and their families.

In this bill will work to inform the veterans of this latest war that there are some health problems that need to be looked at. As the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs (KCVA) and the board works to get veterans on the registry, they will also be working at getting the help through the many state and federal programs that are out there. During my work on this problem I found a great need to inform the veterans of what is out there to help them. Even in this past year we found veterans that had problems from their service who did not go to the VA for any help. They just did not know that they could.

As more and more federal programs are turned over to the state in the form of block grants, the state of Kansas will be one step ahead of other states in knowing what we will need. So please, lets do with this bill, as was done with the HR 5046 and HR 5047, and pass it as a sign to all of our veterans that we care.

Sen. Federal & State Affairs Comm.

Date: 3-5-97

Subject: Pentagon IG Probes Gulf War Logs Date: Mon, 3 Mar 1997 23:22:28 -0500 (EST)

From: DStormMom@aol.com

.c The Associated Press

By JOHN DIAMOND

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Pentagon shifted an investigation of missing Persian Gulf War logs to its inspector general's office Monday.

Deputy Defense Secretary John White announced the new investigation into logs that tracked chemical weapons reports during the Gulf conflict. A team reporting to White had been investigating the logs and filed a preliminary report last week indicating that more than three-quarters of the records are missing even though multiple copies had been stored in safes at U.S. military bases after the war.

"While our study is incomplete and will not be continued by the I.G., I have seen no evidence thus far that anyone intentionally destroyed the log," said Dr. Bernard Rostker, the Pentagon official whose team conducted the preliminary investigation.

"White took the action in order to ensure every possible effort has been made to uncover relevant information that might add to an understanding of Gulf War illnesses," a Pentagon release said.

Thousands of Persian Gulf War veterans who have complained of a variety of unexplained ailments are interested in whether the logs contain evidence that they may have been exposed to chemical weapons. The Pentagon insists it has no evidence that Iraq used chemical weapons during the 1991 conflict. Officials are investigating one episode immediately after the war in which an Army team blew up a weapons dump that contained shells filled with nerve gas.

White ordered the inspector general to pursue all leads in locating original copies of the missing logs, either in paper form or on computer disks. If a full copy cannot be found, the inspector general is to explain why.

The preliminary investigation found that of about 200 log pages believed to have been recorded, only 36 could be found. About half may have been lost due to a computer virus imported into military headquarters during the Gulf War on a disk containing computer games. Earlier, the Pentagon had said that eight days worth of logs were missing.

But much of the material appears to have made it back to the United States. Two sets of disks and a hard copy were stored at U.S. Central Command headquarters in Tampa, Fla. They were lost from a safe sometime in early 1994. Another disk set and hard copy went to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. They also were lost.

The inspector general's investigation is to begin immediately. AP-NY-03-03-97 1656EST Copyright 1997 The Associated Press.

March 5, 1997

To: Senate Committee Chairman O'Leen

From: Perry and Wendy Henault-Topeka, Kansas

Re: House Bill #2108

My husband Perry and I had our first child on August 15, 1995. Much to our surprise, Brendan was born with multiple birth defects and was diagnosed with Goldenhar Syndrome. Neither my husband or I, or our pediatrician had ever heard of this birth defect. were sent to a number of specialists, including a Geneticist who diagnosed Brendan's birth defect. We discussed family background to try to determine a source. My husband and I have no history of any birth defects in our families. I mentioned to the Geneticist that Perry had served in the Gulf War and asked if there could be a connection. He immediately dismissed the subject saying there was no proof of a connection. As we searched for answers, we came across an article in People Magazine and a cover story in Life Magazine, November 1995 issue. The story spoke exclusively on babies with birth defects born to Gulf War Vets. The article specifically listed Goldenhar Syndrome as one of the prime birth The story listed telephone numbers to Veterans Administration and the Pentagon as well as Association for Birth Defect Children. We contacted the VA and the Pentagon only to be given hours of run around. We were finally told that my husband could come in for a physical if he was feeling any symptoms, however, no data was being collected for spouses or children of the We were able to register Brendan with ABDC who got us in touch with other Goldenhar families that served in the Gulf War. In a desperate attempt to find out if there were other local families experiencing the same frustrations, we contacted the local television station and they agreed to do a two part segment on our story. The response was overwhelming. We received a tremendous amount of information from a variety of people. We also received numerous calls from families who had seen the segment and had suffered miscarriages, children with birth defects, children who had died shortly after birth due to multiple serious birth defects as well as other veterans who were experiencing various symptoms.

It has been very frustrating to hear that the Presidential Advisory Committee reports no connection to the birth defects and parents serving in the Gulf War when they only have five Goldenhar cases listed. The ABDC has fifteen cases of Goldenhar Syndrome reported from families who served in the Gulf War. There are an additional five cases which have the symptoms of Goldenhar but have not been specifically diagonised. It would be easy to say there is no connection based on collecting insufficient data. Specifically, Bill #2108 would finally allow us document Brendan's birth defect with the government. It would also alllow others to registar any problems they may have. Until a registry is put in place, who knows how many cases will not be documented.

Attachment: #3



# STATEMENT BY FRANCINE HINES President

## ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

#### STATE OF KANSAS

March 5, 1995

TO : Senator Lana Oleen, Chairperson

Members of the Federal and State Affairs Committee

Madam Chairperson,
Members of the Committee

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear before you today.

President: Francine Hines

**Board of Governors** 

Honorary Chair: Merrill Werts

COL (Ret) James E. Fox Dallas W. Freeborn Gregory Gomez, III Meredith E. Kidd David H. McElreath LTC Ronald F. Nicholl LTC Dennis Parry CSM Warren Smith Joe de la Torre As I have stated in my recent testimony before Representative Garry Boston and his Committed I am here to reaffirm our support of S.B. 297 relating to the Persian Gulf War Syndrome as referenced in H.B. 2108 amended.

We do not have all the answers to the existing problem affecting our veterans and their families but it is our obligation to urge our legislators to take the necessary steps to implement the means for carrying out the intent of these bills: to provide adequate medical and financial support to our soldiers.

I have appeared before you on several occasions in the past. We cannot afford to wait years to remedy to the present situation.

On behalf of the Association of The United States and its members, I urge you to support S.B. 297.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson and members of the Committee, for your consideration and for your commitment.

# # # # # #

STATEMENT BY Commander HALSEY HINES (ret.) USNAVY

TO: Senator Lana Oleen, Chairperson

Members of the Federal and State Affairs Committee

RE: Senate Bill 297

Madam Chairperson.
Members of the Committee

My name is Halsey Hines, retired US NAVY Commander, a veteran of WWII and the Korean conflict.

I am here to ask you to support Senate Bill 297, relating to the Persian Gulf War Syndrome affecting veterans and their families, as referenced to in House Bill 2108 amended.

During my 23 years of service, I recall that it took months, even years before necessary steps were taken to provide the needed medical and financial support to our veterans. Yet, those same veterans were expected to meet their obligations without hesitation.

The same is true for the Persian Gulf War veterans.

Now is the time for action. Support Senate Bill 297.

Thank you for your consideration.

March 5, 1997

GOOD AFTERNOON. I AM CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER ROSANNA MORROW,
PRESIDENT, TOPEKA CHAPTER, THE ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED
STATES ARMY. ON BEHALF OF OUR MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND
THEIR FAMILIES, WE ARE ASKING YOU TO SUPPORT SENATE BILL NO.
297 RELATING TO THE PERSIAN GULF WAR SYNDROME. I UNDERSTAND
THAT THIS SENATE BILL REPRESENTS HOUSE BILL 2108 AS AMENDED,
WHICH WE STRONGLY SUPPORTED.

OUR SOLDIERS HAD THE COURAGE TO SERVE OUR COUNTRY IN THE
PERSIAN GULF. WE ARE ASKING KANSAS TO HAVE THE COURAGE TO
PROVIDE INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT THOSE WHOSE HEALTH
WAS EFFECTED WHILE SERVING IN THE PERSIAN GULF WAR.

THESE SOLDIERS WILL EVENTUALLY BE DISCHARGED FROM THE MILITARY.

WHEN THEY AND THEIR FAMILIES SUFFER FROM THE ILLNESSES THAT

WERE CAUSED BY EXPOSURE IN THE GULF WAR, WE CANNOT LEAVE THEM

WITH NO WHERE TO TURN.

THIS BILL WILL HELP PREVENT THE INTOLERABLE SITUATION OF THAT
VETERAN ONE DAY HEARING THE UNGRATEFUL WORDS, "YOU WERE
DISCHARGED YEARS AGO AND YOUR HEALTH ISSUES ARE NOT SERVICE
RELATED". PLEASE DON'T LET THIS ISSUE BE DISCOUNTED. PLEASE
SUPPORT SENATE BILL NO. 297.

THANK YOU.

Attachment: #6

# Testimony in Support of House Bill 2108 by R.W. Trewyn

Military service during wartime is an experience fewer and fewer Americans can recount firsthand. A small minority of our population have borne that burden, so the majority have been spared the consequences and sacrifices such service demands. However, when large numbers of those who answered the call-to-arms must suffer the consequences of their service long after the conflict ends, something is desperately wrong, particularly, when their calls for help appear to go unanswered.

Many who served America in the Persian Gulf War believe their needs are not being addressed by the federal government. Many don't know where to turn. House Bill 2108 will begin to remedy that problem for Kansas veterans. Kansas cannot wait for the federal government to admit that more than stress is at work causing the physical ailments experienced by so many veterans of that war. The House, the Senate, and the Governor should unite in support of House Bill 2108 to demonstrate to those Kansans who served in the Gulf War that their sacrifices are still of concern. Kansas should be no less committed to Kansas veterans than Iowa or Ohio are to their veterans. Comprehensive studies on the impact of service in the Persian Gulf have already been undertaken in Iowa and Ohio.

The Iowa Persian Gulf Study Group recently published their findings in the Journal of the American Medical Association and proposed that a variety of neurotoxins encountered by Gulf War soldiers may have led to the symptoms they now experience in civilian life. This would square with a toxicology study on poultry where it was found that combinations of chemicals to which Gulf War soldiers may have been exposed are highly toxic to the central nervous system. Alone, these chemicals had no effect. Professor Fred Oehme in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Kansas State University was a member of the research team that analyzed the effects of the pesticides DEET and permethrin along with the anti-nerve gas agent pyridostigmine bromide. The synergistic effects of these agents are extremely deleterious.

The Ohio legislature authorized a study in 1996 to examine the health, family, economic, and employment outcomes affecting Ohio military veterans who served in operation Desert Storm. Funding for the project was awarded to the Center for the Study of Veterans in Society, an Ohio-based nonprofit research organization.

Kansas State University researchers received a major subcontract for the Ohio study. The K-State researchers have developed the 40-page survey instrument for this project, and they are responsible for administering the survey as well as compiling and analyzing the results. Approximately 3,000 Ohio National Guard and Reservists are being surveyed and about 30% of the results have been collected to date.

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Date: 3-5-97 Attachment: #7 The K-State team is being led by Professor Walter Schumm from the School of Family Studies and Human Services. It includes Professors Anthony Jurich (family studies and human services), James Ragan, Jr. and Bernt Bratsberg (economics), and Earl Reppert, MD (Lafene Health Center).

Analyses of the preliminary Ohio data indicate significant effects of Gulf War service on veterans' general health, reproductive health, and divorce/separation rates. For males, 67% of those mobilized reported health problems, compared to 33% who were not mobilized. For females, the results to date are 80% for those mobilized versus 36% for the control group. In the area of reproductive health, 22% of those mobilized reported problems as opposed to 4% for those not mobilized; no gender differences are obvious at this point in the study. Lastly, Ohio Desert Storm veterans (male and female) who were mobilized reported an 18% divorce/separation rate as compared to a 9% rate among those National Guard and Reservists not mobilized. The rate is particularly high, 52%, for female veterans who were mobilized. The Ohio numbers are still preliminary, but they are clearly indicative of long-lasting effects of service in the Persian Gulf.

One unique aspect of the Ohio study compared to other national and state studies is the inclusion of survey parameters other than health that may have been influenced by service in the Persian Gulf, for example, family issues, subsequent earnings, and civilian employment. This is essential to gain a full understanding of the consequences of service in the Persian Gulf and needs that arise therefrom. Health problems can affect family relationships, income, employment, and a whole host of other areas and issues. Mobilization without subsequent health problems could negatively impact many of these as well. The economic, employment, and various sub-areas have yet to be analyzed with the preliminary Ohio data.

Ohio recognized the importance of taking a comprehensive approach to understand the overall consequences for the individuals involved. Health isn't the only issue. And it isn't possible to separate outcomes for individual veterans from subsequent repercussions on state services; one will likely be passed on to the other. House Bill 2108 proposes a similarly enlightened, comprehensive approach to evaluating the impact of service in the Persian Gulf.

The federal government seems intent on focusing on a single cause for Gulf War Syndrome. That should not be the primary issue. The issue should be the health of those who served and the overall consequences of their wartime service on their lives subsequently. First, one must define the nature and breadth of the problem or problems. Surveying the affected individuals, employing appropriate controls, is a good first step. Then, one can begin to propose potential solutions. Identifying a causal agent or agents along the way might help, but to blame every outcome on stress is an affront to those who served.

There is concern nationally that the federal government may not be doing everything possible for Desert Storm veterans. As a result, it is left to the states to ensure that those who sacrificed on our behalf do not continue to pay an undue price for their patriotism. Gathering comparative data and creating a registry of those who served from the State of Kansas is an important first step towards doing what is fair and right for Kansas veterans. House Bill 2108 will allow the state to determine the nature of the problems facing these veterans, and it should receive bipartisan support from the Kansas House and Senate.

# SB 297

My name is Stu Entz, I am a member of the State Committee for the Employer's Support of the Guard and Reserve and past Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee of the Kansas Chamber of Commerce and Industry. I have for many years had the opportunity to serve and work with members of both Active Duty and Guard and Reserve units.

I appear in support of and urge your favorable consideration of SB 297 (companion bill to HB 2108) as amended by the House Committee

Most of us feel the events of Desert Storm had a positive purpose and served notice to other nations who take action perceived to not be in our national interest. That effort was unique in many respect: high tech weapons systems, a strategy which began by simply breaking down enemy lines of communications, the use of satellite surveillance, etc. It demonstrated a technological superiority so great as to possibly serve as a deterrent to the world's troublemakers for decades to come.

Desert Storm was also unique in that it brought back the specter of a very old but deadly weapons system, chemical warfare.

In hindsight, coalition forces were so effective in breaking down the Iraqi initiative that the threat of employing chemical weapons

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was avoided and since that time we have been generally convinced that nothing happened in this regard. Even now it is a mystery but, based upon recent events, it is not something that can be categorically ignored. Our State should not ignore the issue. Men and women who serve in this State's Guard and Reserves were there and some suffer unexplained problems similar in nature to others who also served.

If we are to do as we say, that we will support our men and women who make our fighting capabilities second to none, then it seems to me the least we can do is join in the effort to address this lingering issue that seemingly plaques many Desert Storm participants.

I would urge your support of SB 297 with due consideration of the House Committee amendments.

# Testimony by Don Myer, Executive Director

# Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs

## on Senate Bill 297

## before the

# Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs

# March 5, 1997

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Don Myer, and I am the Executive Director of the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs. I wish to provide testimony on Senate Bill 297, the Persian Gulf War Veteran Health Initiative. The intent of this bill is to investigate the impact of "Gulf War Syndrome" on the health of veterans of the state of Kansas and their dependents, and assess the social, economic, and other impacts it has had on the state. This bill, if passed, would have major implications for my agency. It adds the responsibility to develop a survey and other analytic tools to make these assessments, and requires my agency to develop and maintain a "Gulf War Registry." A special board of nine members would become a permanent part of the KCVA, and would help us steer a course that accomplishes these goals in an effective and efficient manner, without needlessly duplicating the efforts of the federal or other state governments, or private efforts. Rather, our efforts would be complementary to the many ongoing initiatives. Even with the 24 continuing studies listed by the Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veteran's Illness, there are voids enough to be filled in the investigation of this phenomenon. Neither the KCVA nor I shrink from the challenges in this bill. If so tasked, I believe that we can successfully fulfill this bill's intent. I have one qualification. As presently staffed and funded, the KCVA would prove to be inadequate to the task. The resources specified in the bill are essential to its success. The Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs exists to care for veterans. We welcome any opportunity to enhance our present capability to do so. All we ask are the tools to get the job done correctly, and to the level of quality our veterans deserve. Thank you for this opportunity to testify. Please contact me at your earliest convenience should you have any questions of me. I would be more than happy to provide you answers to the best of my ability.

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# THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SENATE BILL 297 PRESENTED TO

THE SENATE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MARCH 5, 1997

Thank you for permitting me the opportunity to present testimony in support of Senate Bill 297. Gulf War Syndrome or whatever the catch phrase is this week is real despite contentions by some in both the private, public, and especially the federal government.

Veterans faced the same type of denial regarding radiation exposure due to the atomic tests conducted after World War II and into the 1950's. The Federal government drug its heels, covered up records and data for years until finally beginning to admit responsibility and begin compensation to exposed veterans.

Veterans again faced the same battles regarding exposure to Agent Orange and other toxins used in Vietnam. That war ended with a cease fire in 1973 yet just last year the VA was delaying instructions to begin recognizing spino bifida in the children of exposed veterans as a residual effect of Agent Orange. Veterans groups are still wrestling with the Federal government over other illnesses we believe are directly related to Agent Orange.

Now our newest war veterans are facing the same type of battle. While we are hopeful the Federal Government will be forthcoming with previously hidden files and other records, past history would indicate we have a long wait ahead of us.

The American Legion feels SB 297 is needed to help Kansas establish an accurate means to identify effected veterans, track their medical history as it relates to illness from their service in the Persian Gulf, and the health of their children. We do not think it is too much to ask in order to identify trends which effect the health of our younger veterans and their children.

I would like to call your attention to the attached news article just last Wednesday in the Capital-Journal. Once again the coverup in the federal government is noted by confidential files.

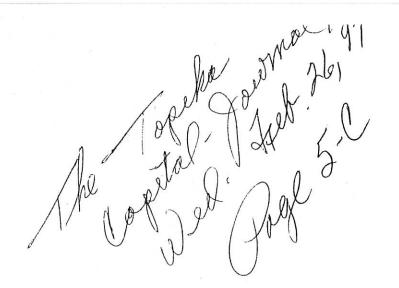
Therefore we urge your support of SB 297.

Respectfully submitted by

Ralph Snyder, Assistant Adjutant The Kansas American Legion

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Attachment: #/o



# Army withheld information on Iraqi weapons

The Associated Press

ASHINGTON — Senior Army officers fighting the Gulf War suspected in February 1991 that an Iraqi weapons depot contained chemical weapons but failed to alert U.S troops who blew up the site less than two weeks later, the Pentagon acknowledged Tuesday

The information is contained in a still classified document, according to the Pentagon's senior investigator into Gulf War matters, Bernard Rostker, He has asked the CIA to declassify the memo, but the request has been denied because it would disclose "sources and methods" on how the information was obtained, Rostker told reporters at a Pentagon briefing.

Rostker called the briefing to release his report into the March 1991 destruction of the Iraqi storage site at Kamisiyah by members of the 37th Engineering Battalion, Last June, the Pentagon announced it had only recently learned that U.S.

troops may have been exposed to chemical weapons during the destruction of the site.

However, the new report makes clear that information existed even before the war was concluded on Feb. 28, 1991, that the Army suspected chemical weapons were at Kamisiyah.

On Capitol Hill, senators who have been critical of the Pentagon's handling of unexplained illnesses among Gulf War veterans said the new report adds weight to suspicions of a government cover-up.

Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., said "we now know positively" that the CIA informed the Army on Feb. 23. 1991, that there were chemical weapons at Kamisiyah and "totally failed to publicly come forward until late last year." The CIA, he said, "is every bit as implicated" as the Defense Department.

Sen. Arlen Spector, R-Pa., chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee, said: "It's extremely disconcerting to find out this morning that the Department of Defense knew about this on Feb. 23, 1991, and had

never told us that, which puts the destruction in March of '91 in a very different light."

Rostker said he doesn't believe any cover-up occurred, saying only that his report highlights "missed opportunities" to pass on information or to investigate what actually happened in the years after the war.

"There's no question that there were leads that were not followed." he said, although "people (were) trying to do their job as best they could."

The report doesn't clarify whether troops actually were exposed to sarin nerve gas. Rostker said, nor does it answer all questions about what happened, let alone why so many veterans are sick.

"It still remains in many ways an enigma." Rostker said. "There are parts of the story that still don't make sense."

Rostker's report notes that at the opening of the Gulf War, the Army's Central Command didn't classify Kamisiyah as a chemical weapons storage site. "However, by late

February 1991, the XVIII (ABN) G 3 indicated that Ramisiyah was suspected of being a chemical weapons storage site." the report states.

The report goes on to note that the first troops to reach the site, members of the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division received information on Feb. 26 that there were "possible chemicals on Objective GOLD." another reference to Kamisiyah. The 24th moved on to cut off Republican Guard troops retreating to Basra, and members of the 82nd Airborne moved in.

"There is no evidence to date that the 82nd Diy (ABN) received the warning from the XVIII Corps (ABN) of possible chemicals on Objective GOLD," the report stated. The 37th Engineers were members of the 82nd, and they participated in the destruction of the weapons cache.

The report further notes that in November 1991 the CIA told the Army that U.S. soldiers may have been exposed to nerve gas when they blew up the weapons dump, but the Army failed to follow tip.



215 North Normandy Olathe Kansas 66061 (913) 782-1613

# WRITTEN TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE

# SENATE COMMITTEE OF FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS

BY

# ARTHUR W. SOLIS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 1997

# **HOUSE BILL NO. 2108**

Chairperson Oleen and Members of the Senate Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of House Bill No. 2108, the Persian Gulf War veterans health initiative act. I commend you on convening this hearing on the health problems of Persian Gulf War veterans of Kansas. As a Vietnam veteran and the Immediate Past State Commander of the **American GI Forum of Kansas**, I am proud that Kansas Hispanics served with distinction during the Persian Gulf War.

The December 31, 1996 *Final Report* of the Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses (PAC) provides an important first step in analyzing the full range of our government's outreach, medical care, research, and coordination of activities pertinent to Gulf War veterans' illnesses. The PAC also investigated the short- and long-term health effects of Gulf War risk factors. It is appropriate to note that Rolando Rios, a Hispanic veteran and attorney from San Antonio, is an advisory committee member.

Chairperson Oleen and committee members, my sole concern with HB 2108 is the proposed statutory provision (subsection (b)(2) of Section 3) which expressly **limit** the appointment of veterans organizations' representatives to the Advisory Board to nominees of the American Legion, VFW, and DAV. The leadership and dedication to veterans and their families of these veterans organizations is noteworthy. Indeed, I am personally indebted to John F. Sommer, Jr., Executive Director of the Washington, DC, office of The American Legion, for information on Gulf War veterans' illnesses and associated issues.

However, I respectfully urge the Senate Committee to amend Section 3(b)(2) to reflect a more inclusive criteria for appointment of Gulf War veterans to the Advisory Committee. An illustrative example for veterans nominees are the provisions for appointment of members of the Veterans Memorial Advisory Committee, K.S.A. 1996 Supp. 77-2253(a)(1), (3).

This concludes my testimony.

Sen. Federal & State Affairs Comm.

Attachment: #//