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U.S. Senate Judiciary Hearing

June 27, 2018

Testimony by: Mr. Robert N. Celestial

Senate Bill 197: Radiation Exposure Compensation Act 2017

Greetings, and thank you Mr. Chairman Senator Mike Crapo and Honorable committee members. My name is Robert N. Celestial Sgt, U.S. Army Retired (DAV) Enewitak Cleanup Veteran. I am from the Island of Guam U.S.A. and I especially want to thank my friends from Idaho Mrs. Tona Henderson and Mr. Jay Truman and of course Senator Mike Crapo and his staff because without them I would not be here today. The people of Guam were exposed to nuclear fallout from the Pacific Nuclear Testing in the Marshall Islands from 1946 to 1962 when 66 Nuclear and Hydrogen bombs were detonated. It was without their knowledge and consent that throughout those years they were exposed to ionizing radiation such as Iodine 131, Strontium 90, and Cesium 137. On July 10, 2000, Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments (PL 106-245) and in September 2002, in response to a congressional mandate (PL 107-206), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) asked the National Research Council's Board on Radiation Effects Research to convene a committee. Under congressional mandate, HRSA charged the committee to consider the issues and make recommendations, regarding three mandates which one of them being item C. "Whether other groups of people or additional geographic areas should be covered under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Program." (2005 National Research Council).

In 2004, I was invited by Dr. Isaf Al Nabulsi Senior Director for the Board on Radiation Effects Research Committee to present oral and written testimony here in Washington D.C. at the National Academies of Science. I presented evidence and oral testimony before Dr. Preston, Dr. Evan Douple and other scientist on the BRER committee. I also included sworn statements from Navy Lt. Bert Schreiber who was the Chemical, Biological, Radiological Officer on Guam in 1952 he testified that "the Geiger counters were off the scale" in November 1952. On October 31, 1952, the first thermonuclear device, with the code name Mike, was detonated. It had a total yield of 10.4 Mt. On November 3, 1952 radiation was detected on Guam. In 2005, National Research council's final report was published "Assessment of the Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure screening and Education Program". On page 200 "The committee initiated an independent assessment of the radiologic consequences related to the weapons

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test in the Pacific to people living on Guam.” This was their conclusion, “Conclusion As a result of its analysis, the committee concludes that Guam did receive measurable fallout from atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons in the Pacific. Residents of Guam during that period should be eligible for compensation under RECA in a way similar to that of persons considered to be downwinders.”

Honorable Senators, I am here today asking not only for your support but for your approval for Senate Bill 197, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 2017. So that not only the people of Guam be included in RECA but everyone that has been affected by their exposure to radiation and uranium mining. We are greatly thankful and may God bless.



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