

1 HJR131
2 218370-1
3 By Representatives Boyd, Paschal, Jones (S), Rafferty, Faust,
4 McCutcheon, Gaston, Stadthagen, Moore (P), Oliver, Smith,
5 Brown (C), Crawford, Drake, Ball, Rogers, Robertson, Wood (R),
6 Howard, Hill, Brown (K), Sanderford, Carns and Grimsley
7 RFD: Rules
8 First Read: 08-MAR-22

8 URGING THE ADOPTION OF PENDING FEDERAL LEGISLATION
9 REQUIRING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HEALTH REGISTRY FOR VETERANS
10 SUBJECTED TO TOXIC EXPOSURE AT FORT MCCLELLAN.

11
12 WHEREAS, Fort McClellan, located in Anniston,
13 Alabama, became a United States Army installation in 1917;
14 after World War II, and until its closing in 1999, Fort
15 McClellan was home to the Army's Chemical Corps and Chemical
16 Weapons School, later known as the Army Chemical Center and
17 School; the school offered eight weeks of basic training
18 followed by eight weeks of training devoted to chemical
19 warfare; in 1953, Fort McClellan secretly conducted Operation
20 Top Hat which used military personnel to test exposure and
21 decontamination methods that included sulfur, mustard, and
22 nerve agents; in 1962, the U.S. Army Combat Development
23 Command Chemical Biological-Radiological Agency moved to Fort
24 McClellan; Fort McClellan was also the site of open-air burn
25 pits that were used in staging the Chemical, Biological,
26 Radiological, Nuclear, and High Yield Explosives (CBRNE) tests
27 until 1975; after a short-term relocation in 1973 to Edgewood

Arsenal in Maryland, both schools returned to Fort McClellan in 1979 and remained there until its closing; and

WHEREAS, in a 1998 U.S. Army Environmental Center study, the Army noted the presence of dangerous contaminants requiring investigation and clean up prior to transferring the Fort McClellan property to the public domain; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the National Academy of Medicine recognized that both the groundwater and soil were contaminated, finding that there were 67 different disposal sites at Fort McClellan containing volatile organic compounds (VOCs), trichloroethylene (TCEs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), pesticides, explosives, heavy metals (Pb), unexploded ordinance (UXO), radioactive sources, and nonstockpile chemical materials; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Health Administration (VA) has noted the existence of toxic chemicals used at Fort McClellan and that potential exposures could have included, but are not limited to, radioactive compounds (cesium-137 and cobalt-60) used in decontamination training activities, chemical warfare agents (mustard gas and nerve agents) used in decontamination testing, friable indoor asbestos pollution inside barracks buildings which all required remedial cleanup actions, and a regional PCB contamination zone in the neighboring town where Fort McClellan personnel made use of public travel stations and a retail shopping district; and

WHEREAS, the Monsanto Chemical Plant, located south of Fort McClellan in Anniston, was instrumental in the

1 development and testing of herbicides used during Vietnam and
2 settled a \$700 million class action lawsuit brought by the
3 residents of Anniston; the settlement explicitly excluded
4 those individuals who were exposed to toxic chemicals while in
5 military service at Fort McClellan; and

6 WHEREAS, while the VA acknowledges the use of toxic
7 chemicals and potential exposures, the VA does not recognize
8 any adverse health conditions associated with military service
9 at Fort McClellan, despite evidence that exposure to high
10 levels of the aforementioned contaminants has been shown to
11 cause a variety of adverse health effects; and

12 WHEREAS, legislation relating to exposure of toxins
13 in the groundwater at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, passed
14 with bipartisan support from the North Carolina Congressional
15 delegation; now therefore,

16 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
17 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Legislature urges
18 Alabama's congressional delegation to support currently
19 pending federal legislation to study the effects of toxic
20 exposure during military service at Fort McClellan,
21 specifically HR 2825, introduced April 22, 2021, directing the
22 Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish and maintain a
23 health registry of veterans stationed at Fort McClellan
24 between 1935 and 1999, and HR 3967, introduced June 17, 2021,
25 creating presumptions of service connection of certain
26 disabilities and diseases among veterans stationed at Fort
27 McClellan.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this
2 resolution be provided to each member of the Alabama
3 Congressional Delegation so that the strong sentiments of this
4 body may be known.