

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

26              WHEREAS, the Monsanto Chemical Plant, located south  
27      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.