



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Chairman Phil Roe, M.D.

H.R. 299: The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017

Background:

Agent Orange, an herbicide used during the Vietnam War, has been known to be associated with certain health issues in people who have been exposed to the chemical. According to [The Agent Orange Act of 1991](#), if a veteran served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1975 and has a disease that has been associated with exposure to Agent Orange, they are automatically presumed to have been exposed to it and therefore qualify for disability compensation.

According to VA's interpretation of this law, only veterans that have set foot on the landmass of Vietnam or served in Vietnam's inland waterways, known as "Brown Water" veterans, qualify for the presumption of exposure to Agent Orange. This does not include "Blue Water Navy" veterans, who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam.

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017 would extend the presumption of exposure to Agent Orange to veterans who served in the Blue Water Navy.