



December 5, 2021

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Chair
U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Jordan
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Subject: H.R. 5338 Radiation Exposure Compensation Program Act Amendments

Dear Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Jordan:

The Alliance of Nuclear Worker Advocacy Groups (ANWAG) has advocated for the Department of Energy's (DOE) civilian nuclear weapons and uranium industry workers for almost twenty years. We monitor the implementation of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 as amended (EEOICPA). EEOICPA is a landmark, compassionate piece of legislation intended to correct the decades-long injustice to nuclear weapons workers. We report all issues to the responsible federal agencies, Congress, and the press.

We write to you today to encourage you to expand and extend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) by adopting the reform legislation identified in H.R. 5338.

One piece of the legislation allows for uranium workers employed after 1971 to be eligible to file a claim under RECA. While the Atomic Energy Commission's (AEC), a DOE predecessor agency, federal subsidy to uranium mines and mills ended in 1971 the AEC was involved with the uranium industry after that by leasing lands to private companies¹.

A second leasing program was initiated in 1974. The previously withdrawn lands were divided into 44 lease tracts and offered to the domestic uranium industry through a competitive bid process. During the next 20 years, more than 1.7 million tons of ore were produced from the lease tracts, yielding approximately 6.5 million pounds of uranium and 33 million pounds of vanadium, and generating \$53 million in royalties to the federal government.

According to DOE's Uranium Leasing Program Management Plan², DOE's objectives are to

¹ [Uranium Leasing Program: Program Summary | Department of Energy](#)

² [ULP Program Management Plan \(energy.gov\)](#)

- ***Provide a safe working environment for employees and provide adequate protection to the general public and the environment (Emphasis added).***
- *Provide fair and timely monetary return to the federal government.*
- *Establish a climate that stimulates competition for ore supplies in the area.*
- *Achieve an orderly development of mineral resources and maximize the extraction of ore.*
- *Make program activities compatible with a free and open market.*

Another important reform that will benefit both claimants under EEOICA and RECA concerns chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). Currently, CLL is excluded as a specified disease under RECA. However, in 2012, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) determined that CLL is a radiogenic cancer.³

ANWAG also encourages the committee to expand the areas which will cover additional downwinder communities. There is no magical line where the spread of radiation will not cross. What is especially egregious is that the people living near the Trinity Site, where the first atomic bomb was exploded, were never included in the original RECA legislation. H.R. 5338 will correct that injustice.

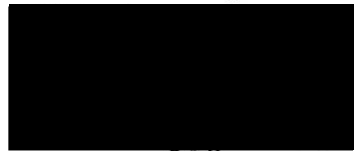
ANWAG thanks you for reviewing H.R. 5338 and encourages the committee to accept the changes to RECA.

Sincerely,



Terrie Barrie

ANWAG Founding Member



³ [CLL FRN.pdf \(cdc.gov\)](#)