



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO ♦ HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Department of Internal Medicine
Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine

December 2, 2021

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

Dear Chairman Nadler

I request you to extend and expand the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) to include post-1971 era uranium workers (HR 5338).

As a tenured professor at the University of New Mexico (UNM), I have been taking care of uranium and nuclear weapons workers since 2006 at the only Occupational Lung Disease Clinic in the Southwest. I hold the Miners Colfax Medical Center Endowed Chair for Mining Related Lung Diseases. I have received the 2021 Outstanding Service Award for Dedication to the Health and Treatment of New Mexico's Miners from the New Mexico Mining Museum, the 2020 UNM School of Medicine Community Engagement Award, and the 2017 Cold War Patriots Recognition and Commendation for Outstanding Care and Advocacy for Nuclear Weapons and Uranium Workers. In addition, I am the Medical Director of the Miners' Wellness TeleECHO Program, a virtual educational platform for professionals involved in the care of uranium and nuclear weapons workers. The Program is recognized as a Rural COVID-19 innovation by HRSA's Rural Health Information Hub and a 2019 Innovation in fellowship education by the American Thoracic Society.

I have published multiple peer-reviewed scientific manuscripts on the diseases and care of uranium workers¹⁻¹³. One such manuscript demonstrated that the symptom and respiratory disease burden in post-1971 era uranium workers were comparable to pre-1971 workers. Our findings argue that screening, medical, and compensation benefits for respiratory diseases should be extended to post-1971 era uranium workers. Given that uranium workers constitute an underserved, poor, rural population with a high proportion of American Indians and Hispanics, these services are sorely needed, and expansion of RECA will help provide these services. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely

Akshay Sood, MD, MPH
Assistant Dean, Mentoring and Faculty Retention
Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine
Department of Internal Medicine
University of New Mexico School of Medicine
1 University of New Mexico, MSC 10 5550
Albuquerque, NM 87131, USA
Telephone: 505-272-4751

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