



UTAH STATE LEGISLATURE

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September 29, 2021

The Honorable Mike Lee
U.S. Senate
361A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Lee:

In accordance with the Utah State Legislature's overwhelming bipartisan passage of H.C.R 18, which the governor signed on March 17, 2021, we urge Utah Members of Congress to co-sponsor and assist in the passage of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2021.

Congress enacted the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) in 1990 and broadened the act's scope in 2000 to provide compensation for the devastating and deadly health effects of radiation exposure that resulted from government activities. RECA began to address the grave injustice inflicted upon unsuspecting civilians who were exposed to radiation through the uranium industry and from fallout from atmospheric nuclear weapons tests.


The original RECA legislation was a bi-partisan effort sponsored by Senator Orrin Hatch and Representative Wayne Owens. The RECA Amendments of 2000 were also a bi-partisan effort sponsored by Senator Orrin Hatch and Representative Jim Matheson. In the same spirit of cooperation, the proposed RECA Amendments of 2021 are also a bipartisan effort sponsored by Senator Mike Crapo, Senator Ben Ray Lujan, Representative Teresa Leger-Fernandez and Representative Burgess Owens.

People throughout Utah and neighboring western states have suffered and continue to suffer serious health consequences from exposure to radiation related to the United States nuclear weapons development and testing program and from the federal government's failure to protect uranium workers.

The Radiation Exposure Compensation Program is scheduled to expire on July 10, 2022 and claims filed thereafter will be barred. There are still many citizens who have been exposed to radiation from the government's testing program who have not yet developed compensable disease. Over time, these individuals will likely develop health complications and will be denied compensation due to the difficulty of perfecting their claims or because of an arbitrary deadline.

The Utah State Legislature, with the concurrence of the governor, through H.C.R. 18, have expressed their desire that the Utah Congressional Delegation support the passage of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2021. As the signatories of this letter, we seek once again to bring this important issue to your attention and enlist your support.


Respectfully,




Senate President J. Stuart Adams




Senate Majority Leader Evan J. Vickers



Senator Derrin R. Owens



Speaker Brad R. Wilson



Representative Doug Owens



Senator David P. Hinkins