

Written Testimony
The Honorable Dina Titus, Member of Congress (NV-01)

Member Day House
Committee on Veterans Affairs'
December 4, 2025

Chairman Bost, Ranking Member Takano, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today and for your continued leadership on behalf of our nation's veterans.

In Nevada's First Congressional District, I hear from veterans every day: men and women who served with honor, who returned home expecting fair treatment and support, and who now face unnecessary barriers to the care and benefits they rightfully earned.

Among them are our atomic veterans and the servicemembers who worked at the Nevada Test and Training Range. Individuals whose missions were so classified that their own presence was effectively erased, even as they suffered from the effects of toxic and radiation exposure.

For decades, these veterans have carried illnesses without recognition, fought claims without documentation, and battled a system that too often tells them they "were never there" because their records were masked or buried behind classifications.

The military pledges to leave no soldier behind. As Members of Congress, we must live up to that same commitment.

That is why I reintroduced the PRESUME Act, to eliminate the unjust requirement and almost impossible task of having atomic veterans prove a specific radiation dose before accessing the VA benefits they earned.

Veterans at the Nevada Test Site and other nuclear testing locations were often exposed to toxic radiation without their knowledge. Many were never told they were being exposed, and today, these atomic veterans suffer from pulmonary issues, cancers, and other serious illnesses.

Currently, to establish entitlement to what the VA calls "presumptive diseases," veterans must provide proof of on-site participation and radiation dose estimates from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, data that has historically been unreliable

When the government controls the data, veterans should not bear the burden of proving the impossible. The PRESUME Act would remove these bureaucratic barriers and is endorsed by Disabled American Veterans, The Invisible Enemy, Veterans of Foreign Wars, National Association of Atomic Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Military-Veterans Advocacy, and Enewetak Atoll Atomic Cleanup Veterans.

There are hundreds of atomic veterans, and we must act before it is too late, as we did with Agent Orange veterans.

It is time for Congress to advance this crucial piece of legislation. By doing so, we can remove bureaucratic hurdles, ensure parity with other radiation programs, and honor our nation's promise to those who served in harm's way.

We must never forget that these men and women played a critical role in securing the U.S.'s victory in the Cold War at great personal cost and with little public recognition. It is long past time we honor that service with the care and justice they deserve.

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Members, as we continue building upon the success of the PACT Act, I urge the Committee to keep atomic veterans front and center. Their service was extraordinary. Their sacrifice was honorable. Their delay in receiving care has been unconscionable.

We cannot change the past, but we can ensure that the path forward is one of dignity, transparency, and justice.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak, and I look forward to working closely with the Committee to deliver for all veterans.