



February 2, 2026

## Statement for the Record

### Veterans Affairs Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee In Support of H.R. 4469 – The PRESUME Act

Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Subcommittee:

My name is Dave Crete, and I submit this statement on behalf of The Invisible Enemy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocating for veterans, Department of Defense employees, and contractors who were exposed to hazardous environments during their service often without adequate documentation, transparency, or long-term accountability.

The Invisible Enemy strongly supports H.R. 4469, the *Providing Radiation Exposed Servicemembers Undisputed Medical Eligibility (PRESUME) Act*, because it addresses a fundamental and long-standing injustice faced by radiation-exposed veterans: the requirement to prove exposure using records that frequently never existed.

Nowhere is this failure more evident than among veterans who served on the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR). Thousands of service members performed classified and hazardous missions in and around nuclear test areas, contaminated soil, legacy fallout zones, and facilities with known radiological risks. Many of these veterans were never issued dosimetry, were not informed of the hazards they faced, and were later told—often decades after service—that they could not prove exposure because no dose records exist.

That absence of records is not a failure of the veteran. It is a failure of the system. Further compounding this injustice is a medical reality that H.R. 4469 appropriately recognizes: radiation does not affect every individual the same way. Our growing cohort of NTTR veterans demonstrates wide variation in health outcomes like cancers, pulmonary disease, cardiovascular conditions, and neurological disorders despite similar duty locations and timeframes. Genetics, cumulative exposures, duration, age, and environmental factors all influence how radiation manifests in the body. A single numerical dose threshold cannot accurately capture this reality.

Requiring veterans to meet a minimum radiation dose standard, especially when dosimetry was never provided, creates an impossible evidentiary burden and denies care to those who are

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A Tax Deductible 501c3 Organization

3945 QUADREL STREET | LAS VEGAS, NV 89129 | 702-683-3815  
EMAIL: [info@TheInvisibleEnemy.org](mailto:info@TheInvisibleEnemy.org) | WEBSITE: [TheInvisibleEnemy.org](http://TheInvisibleEnemy.org)

clearly suffering the long-term consequences of service-related exposure. H.R. 4469 corrects this by preventing the Department of Veterans Affairs from relying on arbitrary dose requirements when determining eligibility for radiation-exposed veterans.

This bill does not lower standards of evidence irresponsibly. Instead, it aligns policy with historical facts, medical science, and basic fairness. It acknowledges that classified service, incomplete records, and biological variability should not disqualify veterans from the benefits they earned through their service.

The Invisible Enemy urges the Subcommittee to advance H.R. 4469 and to continue working toward a VA system that places the burden of uncertainty where it belongs—on the government, not on the veteran.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record, and for your continued commitment to those who served.

Respectfully submitted,

*David J. Crete Jr.*

Chairman, The Invisible Enemy

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