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Congress of the United States
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November 22, 2019

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Director Mulvaney,

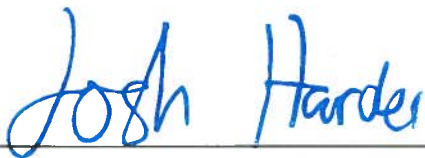
We write today to demand that you stop your efforts to block the inclusion of four diseases in the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) presumptive list for Agent Orange exposure. As you know, the National Academy of Medicine and the VA have both recommended adding Parkinsonism, Bladder Cancer, Hypertension, and Hypothyroidism to the list of covered conditions. Media reports and official documents show that you personally intervened to stop tens of thousands of veterans affected by these diseases from getting the health care they deserve.

This conversation began in 2017 when former VA Secretary Shulkin recommended to OMB that Parkinson's-like symptoms, Bladder Cancer, and Hypothyroidism be added to the list of Agent Orange-related conditions that qualify veterans for benefits. The National Academies of Medicine (NAM) released further scientific evidence to support the VA's position, and recommended that hypertension be added to the "sufficient evidence of an association" category. In simple terms, the experts on this issue want to act and recognize the VA's obligation to help veterans with diseases directly linked to exposures of Agent Orange.

It sounds like you disagree. That's despicable. It is critical we fight for the health and welfare of our veterans as doggedly as they fought for our country. This delay to include the four conditions contradicts the recommendation of a previous VA Secretary as well scientific evidence. The VA has acted, and it now it is incumbent upon you and OMB to get these veterans the care they deserve. You have the chance to help over 80,000 veterans who suffer daily from the symptoms of these medical conditions. Do not delay this decision any further.

We look forward to working with you on these issues and a response from you on when Congress can expect these medical conditions to be added to the presumptive list for Agent Orange exposure.

Sincerely,



Josh Harder

United States Representative (CA-10)



Mark Takano

United States Representative (CA-41)