

VFW Demands Answers from White House, VA for Delayed Decision on Additional Agent Orange Diseases

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WASHINGTON – Military Times today reported that White House officials, including Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney, are responsible for the delayed decision on additional Agent Orange diseases.

“In light of today’s news regarding the continued delay to add four presumptive diseases to the Agent Orange list, the VFW is extremely upset and dissatisfied with the backdoor political games that are being played in Washington as the lives of our veterans are at stake,” said VFW National Commander William “Doc” Schmitz. “The health and welfare of our nation’s veterans should, and must, be our number one priority.”

According to the story, White House officials challenged the authority of former Secretary of Veterans Affairs David Shulkin and impeded enactment of three additional health conditions to the list of diseases eligible for Agent Orange benefits. The [article](#) included an excerpt written by Shulkin and sent to Mulvaney requesting support for his effort to expand the list of Agent Orange presumptive diseases.

“What we are seeing this week only underscores the need for Congress to take up comprehensive toxic exposure legislation for veterans during this term,” said Patrick Murray, deputy director of VFW National Legislative Service. “Every time we send our men and women to war we end up deliberating for decades as to whether or not they were exposed to toxic chemicals. This type of absurdity must stop.”

When the VFW came to Capitol Hill 100 years ago, we argued that veterans of World War I deserved health care and compensation benefits because of the human tolls of war. Today is not different.

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“The White House and VA must do the right thing and approve these Agent Orange presumptive conditions immediately,” said Schmitz. “We cannot, and will not, stand by and allow another veteran to lose their life because of the bureaucracy of Washington. The time for waiting is over.”