



To: House Committee on General, Housing & Military Affairs  
From: Jessa Barnard, Vermont Medical Society  
Date: April 10, 2019  
RE: S. 111, An Act Relating to the U.S. Dept of Veterans Affairs'  
Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry

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The Vermont Medical Society is the State's largest physician membership organization, representing approximately 2,000 physicians, physician assistants and medical students of all practice types and locations. **The Vermont Medical Society supports S. 111 and efforts to address improving veterans' health.** Further, VMS supports the finding of the bill that the State of Vermont and the U.S. government should prioritize the health of service members and veterans, including addressing any health impacts from exposure to burn pits.

Specifically, S. 111 calls on the Department of Health to disseminate information regarding symptoms associated with exposure to open burn pits and contact information for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry. The Department is called on to make the information available to all licensed health care providers in Vermont "in cooperation with appropriate professional licensing boards and professional membership associations."

As you are aware, the Burn Pit Registry is a database of health information voluntarily provided by Veterans and Service members that will help VA to collect, analyze, and report on health conditions that may be related to environmental exposures experienced during deployment. As one health professional association in the State, VMS supports the language currently in S. 111 and is happy to be a source of information for health care providers via our website, electronic newsletter and other communications venues.

Again, thank you for the invitation to testify. We support all Vermont veterans being educated on the dangers of burn pits and being made aware of the registry – which will help the VA better study this issue and understand the impacts on veterans that were exposed to toxic materials.

I am happy to answer any questions.