



# Canadian Veterans Deserve Fairness & Equity

Dear Deputy Minister Ledwell,

If an American veteran is exposed to harmful chemical agents such as burn pits or other known carcinogens while serving, and later develops cancer, they are automatically granted an award. In contrast, a Canadian veteran who served alongside their American counterparts and faced identical environmental hazards must navigate a complex, outdated claims process designed for traditional injuries. This process often takes years to complete and leaves our veterans frustrated and disheartened.

At the core of this inequity is the inconsistent interpretation of paragraph 50(g) of the Veterans Well-Being Regulation. The subjective phrasing of *“reasonably caused the injury”* has placed an unfair burden of proof on Canadian veterans. They are frequently required to provide additional evidence, such as medical opinions directly linking their cancer to their service—something that few oncologists are equipped to provide.

**\*\*This is an injustice we can no longer ignore.\*\***

A straightforward amendment to paragraph 50(g) can address this inequity. By adopting a fair and equitable interpretation of *“reasonably caused”* as shown below, Canada can ensure its veterans receive the same recognition and support as their American counterparts.

You can make this happen by issuing an Executive Directive instructing your staff to apply the interpretation below when considering claims from veterans with cancer.

## A Fair and Equitable Interpretation of *“reasonably caused”*

### If

a veteran was exposed to Burn Pits, or oil fires, while in service, including, but not limited to, locations in Afghanistan, SW Asia, Bosnia, Croatia, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, or the Persian Gulf;

### or

if a veteran was exposed to any of the chemical agents identified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), or any other credible cancer research body, as definitely, probably or possibly causing cancer in humans, or chemical herbicides such as Agent Orange;

### Then

the veteran's exposure must be presumed to have *“reasonably caused”* the veteran's cancer and the veteran's file can automatically proceed to the assessment phase to determine the appropriate award.