

THE TOTAL COST OF THE LEGISLATION

The cost of the Agent Orange Equity Act over a 10 year period **\$2,124,700,000**

This number represents disability compensation payments for new claims for disabilities caused by exposure to Agent Orange from Vietnam veterans, without consideration for previous claims, retro-payment or other adjustments possible under VA regulations. Those types of special conditions are unpredictable, and will likely be insignificant to the overall cost of the bill.

We have arrived at this dollar figure using several known variables based on the research required to create at [http://www.bluewaternavy.org/Vietnam Veterans Final Fact Sheet.pdf](http://www.bluewaternavy.org/Vietnam%20Veterans%20Final%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf) entitled "A Definitive Head Count of Vietnam Veterans". These costs are presented as line items in a spreadsheet available on the Internet at [http://www.bluewaternavy.org/spreadsheet 2254.htm](http://www.bluewaternavy.org/spreadsheet%202254.htm) . What follows are special considerations given in the computations which control otherwise-variable factors.

There are some hard facts to swallow based on that research:

Of the total 3,403,100 personnel in all branches of service deployed to the Southeast Asian Theater, less than 850,000 are alive today. The total number of living veterans who served in the Blue Water Navy (BWN) as offshore Navy, Coast Guard and Fleet Marines and 'in theater' Thailand, Laos and Cambodia (TLC), is no more than 265,125.

Using 2009 compensation rates, a veteran receiving 100% disability compensation is paid **\$33,876** per year (cost approximate). But as of July, 2006, only about 8% of all veterans receiving any disability payments had been granted a 100% disability rating.

Historically, of all claims submitted specifically for Agent Orange-related disabilities, only 7.6% were granted. Disability compensation payments for all service connected disabilities show the following trends:

- 49% of all disability compensation paid was for ratings of 20% or less **>\$2,916/yr**
- 8% of all disability compensation paid was for ratings of 100%
- Only about 30% of all Vietnam veterans ever filed for disability
- The average compensation payment is for 10% ratings **\$1,476/yr**

However, because of the types of Agent Orange-based diseases these older Vietnam veterans have, and also because of the stage these diseases are in because of their age and the time they have gone untreated, we are suggesting that the average rating given under this program will be 40%

\$6,492/yr

In nearly all cases, those years will number less than 10.

Vietnam veterans are dying at an astonishing rate, regardless of disability. Between 2000 and 2007, an estimated 490,135 Vietnam veterans died of all causes. Because the VA stopped providing health care and disability compensation to BWN veterans in 2002, they are directly responsible for the deaths of approximately 100,000 BWN veterans between 2002 and 2009.

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