

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 211**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 15, 2021

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman AURA K. DUNN

District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

Assemblywoman GABRIELA M. MOSQUERA

District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)

Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY

District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

Memorializes the President and Congress to expand certain benefits to the grandchildren of veterans impacted by Agent Orange.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/25/2021)

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** memorializing the President and
 2 Congress of the United States to expand certain benefits to the
 3 grandchildren of veterans impacted by Agent Orange.

4
 5 **WHEREAS**, Spina Bifida is a spinal cord defect often requiring
 6 extensive life-long medical care and may cause health issues
 7 leading to disability such as paralysis, walking and mobility
 8 problems, nerve damage, bowel and bladder issues, and
 9 hydrocephalus, among others; and

10 **WHEREAS**, Evidence indicates that exposure to “Agent Orange”, a
 11 herbicide extensively used during the Korean and Vietnam Wars,
 12 may lead to Spina Bifida in the children of veterans who were
 13 exposed to the toxin and the United States Congress has
 14 acknowledged the connection through the enactment of the “Agent
 15 Orange Benefits Act of 1996”; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Benefits provided by the “Agent Orange Benefits Act of
 17 1996” include a monthly monetary allowance, a vocational
 18 program, counseling and rehabilitative services, employment
 19 services, and health care benefits which have improved the lives of
 20 the children of veterans who were born with Spina Bifida; and

21 **WHEREAS**, Recent evidence indicates that the grandchildren of
 22 veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange also suffer from
 23 elevated incidences of Spina Bifida, but these children are not
 24 eligible for the benefits provided in the “Agent Orange Benefits Act
 25 of 1996”; and

26 **WHEREAS**, Expanding benefits to the grandchildren of eligible
 27 veterans who suffer from Spina Bifida would greatly alleviate the
 28 financial burden caused by medical costs associated with treatment
 29 of the condition and enable them to further their careers through the
 30 additional educational and employment services afforded to them;
 31 and

32 **WHEREAS**, Spina Bifida is a life-long debilitating disease affecting
 33 both the children and grandchildren of Korean and Vietnam War
 34 veterans exposed to Agent Orange and the benefits provided to
 35 veterans’ children by the “Agent Orange Benefits Act of 1996”
 36 should be expanded to include the grandchildren of these veterans;
 37 now, therefore,

38
 39 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
 40 *Jersey (the Senate concurring):*

41
 42 1. The President and Congress of the United States are
 43 respectfully memorialized to expand the scope of the “Agent
 44 Orange Benefits Act of 1996” to include individuals diagnosed with
 45 Spina Bifida who are grandchildren of certain veterans of the
 46 United States Armed Forces.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the Secretary of the Senate to the President and Vice President of the United States; the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate; the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives; and every member of the New Jersey Congressional delegation.

STATEMENT

This concurrent resolution memorializes the President and Congress to provide the grandchildren with Spina Bifida of veterans exposed to Agent Orange the same benefits as the children with Spina Bifida of veterans exposed to Agent Orange as provided by the “Agent Orange Benefits Act of 1996”.

Grandchildren of Vietnam and Korean War veterans who are negatively affected by their grandparent's service through the acquiring of diseases caused by Agent Orange such as Spina Bifida will have limited support in managing the consequences of their illness unless provided the same benefits as the children of veterans with the same affliction. Spina Bifida is a life-long debilitating disease that can cause numerous serious health issues. The expansion of benefits to include grandchildren of these veterans will alleviate the financial burden of the disease and provide valuable services such as counseling, education, and employment services. The United States of America has greatly benefitted from the service of all veterans and owes its support to the grandchildren of veterans afflicted by diseases linked to military service.