

**AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT FOR
H.R. 6395
OFFERED BY MR. GOLDEN OF MAINE**

At the end of subtitle C of title VII, add the following new section:

1 **SECTION ____ . PANDEMIC HEALTH ASSESSMENTS EVALU-**
2 **ATE EXPOSURE TO OPEN BURN PITS AND**
3 **TOXIC AIRBORNE CHEMICALS.**

4 (a) EXPOSURE TO OPEN BURN PITS AND TOXIC AIR-
5 BORNE CHEMICALS OR OTHER AIRBORNE CONTAMINANTS
6 AS PART OF HEALTH ASSESSMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF
7 THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS DURING A PAN-
8 DEMIC AND INCLUSION OF INFORMATION IN REGISTRY.—

9 (1) HEALTH ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary of
10 Defense and Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall en-
11 sure that the first health assessment conducted for
12 a member of the Armed Forces or veteran after the
13 individual tested positive for a virus certified by the
14 Federal Government as a pandemic includes an eval-
15 uation of whether the individual has been—

16 (A) based or stationed at a location where
17 an open burn pit was used; or

1 (B) exposed to toxic airborne chemicals or
2 other airborne contaminants relating to service
3 in the Armed Forces, including an evaluation of
4 any information recorded as part of the Air-
5 borne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry.

6 (2) INCLUSION OF INDIVIDUALS IN REG-
7 ISTRY.—If an evaluation conducted under paragraph
8 (1) with respect to an individual establishes that the
9 individual was based or stationed at a location where
10 an open burn pit was used, or that the individual
11 was exposed to toxic airborne chemicals or other air-
12 borne contaminants, the individual shall be enrolled
13 in the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Reg-
14 istry unless the member elects to not enroll in such
15 registry.

16 (3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this
17 subsection may be construed to preclude eligibility of
18 a veteran for benefits under the laws administered
19 by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs by reason of
20 the history of exposure of the veteran to an open
21 burn pit not being recorded in an evaluation con-
22 ducted under paragraph (1).

23 (4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

24 (A) AIRBORNE HAZARDS AND OPEN BURN
25 PIT REGISTRY.—The term “Airborne Hazards

1 and Open Burn Pit Registry” means the reg-
2 istry established by the Secretary of Veterans
3 Affairs under section 201 of the Dignified Bur-
4 ial and Other Veterans’ Benefits Improvement
5 Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–260; 38 U.S.C.
6 527 note).

7 (B) OPEN BURN PIT.—The term “open
8 burn pit” has the meaning given that term in
9 section 201(c) of the Dignified Burial and
10 Other Veterans’ Benefits Improvement Act of
11 2012 (Public Law 112–260; 126 Stat. 2422; 38
12 U.S.C. 527 note).

13 (b) STUDY ON IMPACT OF VIRAL PANDEMICS ON
14 MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS WHO
15 HAVE EXPERIENCED TOXIC EXPOSURE.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans
17 Affairs shall conduct a study, through the Airborne
18 Hazards and Burn Pits Center of Excellence (in this
19 subsection referred to as the “Center”), on the
20 health impacts of infection with a virus designated
21 as a global pandemic, including a coronavirus, to
22 members of the Armed Forces and veterans who
23 have been exposed to open burn pits and other toxic
24 exposures for the purposes of understanding the
25 health impacts of the virus and whether individuals

1 infected with the virus are at increased risk of severe
2 symptoms due to previous conditions linked to toxic
3 exposure.

4 (2) PREPARATION FOR FUTURE PANDEMIC.—
5 The Secretary, through the Center, shall analyze po-
6 tential lessons learned through the study conducted
7 under paragraph (1) to assist in preparing the De-
8 partment of Veterans Affairs for potential future
9 pandemics.

10 (3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

11 (A) CORONAVIRUS.—The term
12 “coronavirus” has the meaning given that term
13 in section 506 of the Coronavirus Preparedness
14 and Response Supplemental Appropriations
15 Act, 2020 (Public Law 116–123).

16 (B) OPEN BURN PIT.—The term “open
17 burn pit” has the meaning given that term in
18 section 201(c) of the Dignified Burial and
19 Other Veterans’ Benefits Improvement Act of
20 2012 (Public Law 112–260; 126 Stat. 2422; 38
21 U.S.C. 527 note).

