



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

501 3rd Street, NW, Suite 701, Washington, DC 20001
202-239-4880 • FAX 202-239-4881 • www.ifpte.org

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Dear Senator:

We are writing to you as the executive officers of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), a union representing upwards of 90,000 professional employees in the federal, public, and private sector, to express our member's deep disappointment and bewilderment in the Senate's failure to advance House Amendment to S. 3373, the *Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022* or the "Honoring Our PACT Act," last Wednesday. When this legislation is considered once more this week, we urge you in the strongest terms possible to pass the motion to close debate and to vote to pass this legislation so that our nation may fulfill its promise to veterans.

As you are well aware, this very same bill passed the Senate on June 16, 2022, with 84 Senators supporting the legislation. If it not for a "blue slip" issue with changes made in the Senate – changes that were agreed with bipartisan support and with the unanimous support of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee – this legislation would have been signed into law by now after passing the House and Senate with strong bipartisan support. The only difference in the *Honoring Our PACT Act* legislation in the Senate and the legislation that passed in failed to garner enough cloture votes to advance is that House Amendment to S. 3373 conforms to the origination clause.

IFPTE members' full-throated support and urgency for the passage of the *Honoring Our PACT Act* is no different from that of so many Americans who are impacted directly as veterans or as family, neighbors, friends, or coworkers of someone who is impacted by service-connected toxic exposure. Many veterans who are IFPTE members are involved in the IFPTE Veterans Committee and IFPTE locals with veterans' committees have repeatedly highlighted this legislation as a priority. Our membership includes veterans and reservists working in the federal government, including at the Department of Navy, Army Corps of Engineers, the Tennessee Valley Authority, Social Security Administration, DOJ, NASA, in the private sector at the Boeing Company, General Electric, Spirit AeroSystems, and in state and local governments in New Jersey, Northern California, and in so many other places. IFPTE households and our members' families include veterans, active-duty service members, and reservists.

This legislation is concerned with fulfilling a commitment to Americans who have served and sacrificed for our nation, Americans who are a part of our communities, our families, and our union. The least we can do is provide necessary care and benefits to veterans and future veterans who may suffer from illnesses and injuries that result from their service. The *Honoring Our PACT Act* is widely recognized by veterans and veteran service organizations as legislation that would correct a grave and ongoing error by providing overdue and necessary healthcare, mental healthcare, and disability benefits to as many as 3.5 million veterans with service-connected exposure to toxins, burn pits, and other

hazardous material. The legislation creates the Cost of War Toxic Exposure Fund to pay for care and benefits to veterans in every state, disability claims processing, medical research, and other associated services. Significantly, the fund provides care, benefits, and services in a timely manner with stable funding. We respectfully and unreservedly disagree with any suggestion that providing funding for necessary care to our veterans is a “budget gimmick” or in any way controversial.

Therefore, we urge you to vote to advance and pass the *Honoring Our PACT Act* this week and send the legislation to the President’s Desk so that our nation can ensure that veterans are provided the benefits, support, and the care they need. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact IFPTE Legislative Director Faraz Khan at 202-239-4892 or fkhan@ifpte.org.

Sincerely,



Matthew S. Biggs
IFPTE President



Gay Henson
IFPTE Secretary-Treasurer

