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# Veterans' Committee Addresses Water Contamination at Camp Lejeune

## Committee hears from veterans as part of hearing on exposure to toxic substances

Today, the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs held a hearing about veterans and families who have been exposed to toxic substances, such as the water contamination at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

"Over the years thousands of military personnel and their families have been exposed to dangerous chemicals where they were living and working while serving our country," Senator Burr said. "Because of its location in my home state, the exposure to water contamination at Camp Lejeune is very personal for me."

Burr's office has heard from many veterans who have had heart-breaking personal experiences with exposure issues, including Jerry Ensminger, a retired Marine master sergeant whose daughter was born on Camp Lejeune in 1975, diagnosed with leukemia at the age of six and, tragically, died three years later.

"Unfortunately, Jerry's case is not unique for veterans who served on Camp Lejeune between 1957 and 1987," Burr added. "A number of studies have suggested a link between the water at Camp Lejeune and various forms of cancer and other diseases, and we owe it to those exposed to complete these studies and give them concrete answers."

Senator Burr has introduced the *Caring for Camp Lejeune Veterans Act of 2009*, which would allow veterans and their family members stationed at Camp Lejeune while the water was contaminated to get medical care from the VA.

"Camp Lejeune veterans and their families deserve closure on this tragic situation and today's hearing is a step towards meeting our moral obligation. For veterans and their families put at risk by exposures - whether in Japan, Afghanistan, Iraq, North Carolina, or elsewhere - we have a solemn duty to take care of those who were put in harm's way while serving our nation," Burr concluded.