

Friday, December 21, 2007
Agent Orange resolution OK'd



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SENATORS unanimously passed yesterday a resolution demanding the inclusion of Guam in the proposed federal compensation program for civilian employees suffering from illnesses and disabilities as a result of their exposure to Agent Orange.

Resolution 95 urges Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo to seek amendment to congressional bill HR 972 so that nonmilitary personnel who were detailed at Andersen Air Force Base during the Vietnam conflict could be duly compensated for their medical condition caused by their exposure to toxic chemicals.

HR 972, also known as the "Civilian Agent Orange Act," establishes the Agent Orange Illness Compensation Fund and sets the compensation amount at \$100,000, payable either to the employee or his or her eligible survivor.

"The resolution is asking Congress to include civilian contractors who were working for the Department of Defense at Andersen Air Force Base in the program. This will apply to individuals who were working at Andersen during the period between January 1962 and May 1975," said Minority Leader Judi Won Pat, D-Malojloj, coauthor of Resolution 95.

Retired airmen and federal employees confirmed on Monday that Agent Orange and other herbicides were stored and sprayed on Guam between early 1960s and late 1990s.

At yesterday's session, the Legislature also approved Resolution 96 authorizing the restoration and rehabilitation of the old Congress building in Hagatna, one of Guam's historical structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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