MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

By: Representative Mayo

To: Military Affairs; Public Health and Human Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 319

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR SCREENING OF MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES WHO SERVED IN CERTAIN AREAS AND WHO MAY HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO DEPLETED URANIUM DURING THAT SERVICE; TO REQUIRE THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL GUARD TO SUBMIT A REPORT TO CERTAIN LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES REGARDING THE TRAINING RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES ON DETECTING WHETHER THEIR SERVICE IS LIKELY TO ENTAIL EXPOSURE TO DEPLETED URANIUM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. (1) For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Depleted uranium" means uranium containing less uranium-235 than the naturally occurring distribution of uranium isotopes.

(b) "Eligible member" means a member who served in the Persian Gulf War, as defined in 38 USCS Section 101, or in an area designated as a combat zone by the President of the United States during Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom.

(c) "Member of the Armed Forces" or "member" means a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, including the Mississippi National Guard, who is a resident of this state.

(d) "Veteran" means a member who served as an eligible member.

(2) On and after July 1, 2007, any eligible member or veteran who returns or has returned to this state after service in an area designated as a combat zone by the President of the United States and who has been assigned a risk level I or II for depleted uranium exposure by his branch or service, or any other member or veteran who has reason to believe that he was exposed to depleted uranium during that service, shall have the right to a best
practice health screening test for exposure to depleted uranium using a bioassay procedure involving sensitive methods capable of detecting depleted uranium at low levels and the use of equipment with the capacity to discriminate between different radioisotopes in naturally occurring levels of uranium and the characteristic ratio and marker for depleted uranium.

(3) On or before January 1, 2008, the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard shall submit a report to the House Military Affairs Committee and Public Health and Human Services Committee and to the Senate Veterans and Military Affairs Committee and Public Health and Welfare Committee on the scope and adequacy of training received by members of the Armed Forces on detecting whether their service as eligible members is likely to entail, or to have entailed, exposure to depleted uranium. The report shall include an assessment of the feasibility and cost of adding predeployment training concerning potential exposure to depleted uranium and other toxic chemical substances and the precautions recommended under combat and noncombat conditions while in a combat zone.

(4) The screening tests specified under subsection (2) of this section may be funded from any funds available or made available for that purpose.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2007.