

Good afternoon Committee Chair, members of the senate. Thank you for giving attention to Senate Joint Memorial 5.

I am Dr. Harvey Thorstad, Commander US Naval Reserve (retired). I am a Vietnam veteran having served as adviser in Vietnam for one year.

In 1962 I personally viewed thirty-three atomic test air bursts off the coast of Christmas Island. Normal viewing range was twenty-two miles. During this time, I wore a film badge and dosimeter. Monitoring assured me that my radiation exposure was within safe limits. We now know that the standards of the time were inadequate. Many years later I developed thyroid problems and had half of my thyroid surgically removed. As many of you may know, thyroid problems are one of the first symptoms of radiation poisoning.

I am past President of Veterans for Peace Chapter 72 (Portland). I am a member of the National Association of Atomic & Nuclear Veterans (NAA&NV). I speak for these organizations. We strongly support Senate Joint Memorial 5.

Veterans for Peace is an international organization of approximately 7000 members based primarily in the United States with chapters in Mexico, Ireland, Britain, Okinawa and Japan. I-84 in Oregon and Idaho is named the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway. Thank you to any of you that may have supported this honor. Part of our statement of purpose is "To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons". More information is available on our web site, <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/>.

The National Association of Atomic and Nuclear Veterans is composed of veterans who were exposed to atomic bomb radiation. As many of our members are dying the organization was recently expanded to include veterans exposed to atomic radiation from other sources, notably, depleted uranium. Depleted uranium is a waste product of nuclear bomb manufacture and nuclear power plants. It's heavier than lead and has been found to be an excellent material for armor piercing artillery shells. Unfortunately, when the shell penetrates armor and explodes it spreads radioactive dust into the atmosphere and surrounding area. Especially, in Iraq this has resulted in radiation poisoning and gene mutations in our soldiers and civilians. The number of children with birth defects has risen remarkably in Iraq.

I-5 from Salem to Albany is now named the Atomic Veterans Highway and July 16<sup>th</sup> has been designated Atomic Veterans Day. Thank you to all that supported these honors.

In summary, Veterans for Peace and the National Association of Atomic and Nuclear Veterans strongly recommend approval of this Memorial.