



May 13, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals that champion the health of all people and communities, I write to urge the U.S. House of Representatives to take up and pass S. 3853, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Reauthorization Act, bipartisan legislation to expand and extend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act.

Originally enacted in 1990, RECA provides compensation to certain individuals who have developed cancer and other specific diseases related to radiation exposure from the U.S. atomic weapons testing site in Nevada and those involved in the mining, processing or transporting of the uranium used in the weapons. The U.S. government conducted nuclear weapons-related activities – including nuclear tests—which harmed many Americans who have so far received no compensation for health consequences under the existing RECA law.

S. 3853, which was passed by a strong bipartisan vote in the Senate on March 7, would extend the RECA program for five years and, crucially, expand compensation to several groups left out of the original RECA. Under the Senate-passed bill RECA would be extended to downwinders in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Guam and new categories of uranium workers and residents in Missouri, Kentucky, Alaska and Tennessee who were harmed by nuclear waste in their areas.

APHA strongly urges the House to quickly take up and pass S. 3853 in the interest of public health and justice for those impacted by the government’s nuclear testing activities. Thank you for your attention to our request.

Sincerely,

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director