



The Waste and Illegal Property Eradication (WIPE) Act

Led in the Senate by: Senators Peter Welch (D-Vt.); Thom Tillis (R-N.C.); Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.); Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska); Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.)

Introduced in the House by: Representatives Raul Ruiz (D-CA-25); Gus Bilirakis (R-FL-12); Claudia Tenney (R-NY-24)

Background:

For decades, the U.S. Department of Defense relied on open-air burn pits to dispose of waste in overseas contingency operations. The department's use of open-air burn pits—which create airborne hazards and increase health risks—exposed an estimated [3.5 million](#) U.S. servicemembers to harmful toxins that have been [linked](#) to long-term health conditions, including respiratory disease, cancer, and heart issues.

In 2022, Congress passed the *Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act (PACT Act)* to expand care and benefits for veterans suffering from toxic exposure. Since the bill was signed into law by President Biden, over [5.6 million](#) veterans have been screened for exposure to toxic chemicals.

Legislation:

The *WIPE Act* will build upon the *PACT Act* by supporting servicemember health and strengthening national security. The bill will improve how the United States eliminates dangerous materials both at home and abroad. This initiative reflects the U.S. Army's funding request for safer, more secure disposal systems.

This legislation invests in modern, secure alternatives including Expeditionary Solid Waste Disposal Systems (ESWDS). ESWDS are mobile, high-temperature incinerators that can destroy not only traditional waste—such as plastics, food and medical waste, and waste oil—but also hazardous and illicit contraband such as unauthorized military equipment, illegal narcotics, and classified materials.

These new systems will also improve how the U.S. secures and eliminates dangerous material and can also be deployed to military bases, border operations, and overseas installations. Further, implementing ESWDS systems will incur no increase in overall defense spending by offsetting the same amount from funds allocated for current open-air waste disposals in contingency operations.

Supporting Organizations:

The *WIPE Act* is supported by Burn Pits 360 and the FealGood Foundation.