

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2509

COMMITTEES
JUDICIARY
HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS
SMALL BUSINESS
AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

July 15, 2025

Brett Shumate
Assistant Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Division
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Assistant Attorney General Shumate:

I write to ensure prompt implementation of the reauthorized and expanded Radiation Exposure Compensation Act ("RECA"), as passed by Congress and signed into law by President Trump on July 4, 2025.¹ The Department of Justice plays a central role in administering RECA, and with the enactment of the expanded law, the Department is now responsible for receiving, evaluating, and processing a broader universe of claims. I urge you to devote sufficient manpower and departmental resources for this important work.

As you know, RECA compensates victims and their families who have been exposed to radiation from the federal government's nuclear programs. Since Congress created the program in 1990, it has provided benefits to tens of thousands of Americans who have developed cancer or other specified diseases after being exposed to radiation from atomic weapons testing or uranium mining, milling, or transporting. Many harrowing tales have emerged for decades after the United States shuttered its test sites and uranium mines, as negligently stored waste continued infiltrating waterways and communities across the country. Now, President Trump and Congress have extended the program to cover more victims and geographic areas.

It is critical that the Department promptly renews its claims process and application, given that prospective claimants have until December 31, 2027, to submit their paperwork. Timely processing of new claims is both feasible and imperative under the law, especially given the age and health of many claimants. The current RECA statute also explicitly allows the Department to use existing funds and resources to process RECA claims.² Congress included this provision to ensure that the Department has sufficient resources to implement RECA fully and without delay.

I will closely monitor the Department's implementation of the law in the months ahead, and respectfully request an update on the Department's implementation progress by August 1, 2025. I stand ready to work with you and the Department to ensure a fair, efficient, and accessible claims process for new RECA claimants.

Sincerely,



Josh Hawley
United States Senator

¹ Public Law No. 119-21, Sec. 100201 et seq.

² RECA § 6(i), 42 U.S.C. § 2210 note.