

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 30, 2020

The Honorable Thomas B. Modly  
Acting Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Acting Secretary Modly,

We are writing to you in response to the Navy's request to sample water obtained from drinking water wells that use groundwater within designated areas adjacent to the installation boundary of Naval Base Kitsap (NBK) Bangor for certain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly known as PFAS. While we appreciate the proactive steps taken by the Navy to determine if PFAS contamination has occurred, we have serious concerns about the potential health risks posed to our constituents and are requesting additional information.

As you are aware, emerging scientific evidence indicates that PFAS chemicals pose serious risks to human health and our environment. Additionally, there is a growing list of examples of PFAS contamination linked to military installations. In March 2018, the Department of Defense (DOD) provided a report to Congress that identified 401 active or closed military installations with known or suspected releases of PFAS chemicals, including at three other Washington state military facilities (Fairchild Air Force Base, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, and Joint Base Lewis-McCord).

Recognizing that this is a developing situation, we would like to request that the Navy provide additional responses to the following questions:

1. When did the Navy initiate the 'Preliminary Assessment' of PFAS compounds and what led to the identification of the 12 potential PFAS source areas used to determine the area of potential contamination for groundwater sampling?
2. We understand notifications of possible contamination are going out to residents today. Is the Navy sending hard copies in the mail, using email, or both? How does the Navy plan to confirm that all 1350 households have received this notification?
3. We understand the Navy will begin sampling on February 21, 2020. Given the time sensitive nature of this issue, is Navy able to begin this process sooner?
4. How long after testing will the Navy provide results to each household? Will the results of contamination be provided to impacted households on a rolling basis or after the testing of all households is completed?
5. What specific PFAS compounds is the Navy testing for?

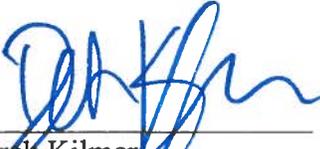
6. Will the Navy be testing the soil, groundwater, and drinking water on NBK to ensure service members and civilians on the base are not at risk?
7. Does the base have the funding they need for testing, remediation and mitigation?
8. Please provide a list of all relevant state and federal agencies that the Navy is coordinating with on this response strategy.
9. We appreciate that the Navy is directly contacting households that may be contaminated, and we think we all share the desire not to create unnecessary concern among communities that are not believed to be impacted, however, we also believe this should be an open and transparent process. What is the Navy's strategy to engage with the broader community about the testing that's occurring?
10. As this is a developing situation, we would like to keep regular lines of communication open. To that end, we request that you provide weekly briefings for our offices on this matter with participation from cooperating agencies, including but not limited to the State Department of Health and the EPA.

We appreciate the proactive steps the Navy has taken, including notifying property owners of potential PFAS contamination around Bangor and scheduling public meetings on February 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, we recognize that the Navy has already suspended the use of the firefighting tool Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF), the primary release source of PFAS chemicals, for training exercises as required by the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act.

There is a legitimate health risk associated with PFAS exposure and we note the vigilance that has already been undertaken. As you continue your mitigation efforts, we formally request that the Navy commit to providing bottled water to all households who receive this notification until the test results confirm that their water is safe to drink.

The health and safety of our constituents is of the utmost concern. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

  
Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress

  
Patty Murray  
United States Senator

  
Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator