

September 5, 2019

Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee
205 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee
728 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
2264 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee
2208 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, Chairman Smith, and Ranking Member Thornberry,

We, the undersigned non-governmental organizations, appreciate your efforts to include several provisions related to per- and poly- fluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2020.

Military communities are among the most vulnerable to the risks of PFAS pollution—which include cancer, reproductive and developmental harms, and immunological effects.¹ The Department of Defense has required the use of PFAS in military firefighting foams for fifty years and estimates that there are more than 400 known or suspected military sites contaminated with PFAS.² Because PFAS never breaks down, any community where PFAS-containing firefighting foam has been discharged in response to fire emergencies, for training exercises, or to test equipment likely has some contamination from PFAS chemicals.

Military communities are not the only communities impacted by PFAS contamination. Experts have identified nearly 500 potential industrial dischargers of PFAS and estimate that 110 million Americans may have drinking water contaminated with PFAS.

¹ <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/health-effects.html>

² https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-05/documents/dod_presentation_epa_summit_pfos_pfoa_may2018_final.pptxx_.pdf

Our communities deserve better. Congress should take action to reduce or eliminate ongoing sources of PFAS pollution, identify the extent of contaminations, and quickly remediate PFAS pollution.

To that end, as Congress finalizes the FY2020 NDAA, we urge you to retain provisions that would:

- Quickly phase out military use of PFAS in firefighting foam;
- End the use of PFAS firefighting foams in training exercises;
- End the use of PFAS in military food packaging;
- Require ground and drinking water quality monitoring for PFAS;
- Require reporting of industrial discharges of PFAS;
- Ensure safe and effective disposal and destruction of military PFAS wastes;
- Provide guidance to ensure the safe and effective destruction and disposal of PFAS wastes;
- Accelerate PFAS cleanups at military facilities through the use of cooperative agreements;
- Designate PFAS as “hazardous substances” under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act;
- Designate PFAS as toxic pollutants under the Clean Water Act;
- Set a health-protective drinking water standard that protects vulnerable populations, including children; and
- Provide funding for additional studies, data sharing, and remediation.

We appreciate your leadership and urge you to support efforts to address PFAS contamination through the NDAA for FY 2020.

Sincerely,

Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Breast Cancer Prevention Partners

Center for Science & Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists

Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger

Clean Cape Fear

Clean Water Action

Delaware Riverkeeper Network

Earthjustice

Ecology Center

Environment America

Environmental Health Strategy Center

Environmental Justice Task Force Tucson
Environmental Working Group
Fight For Zero
Fountain Valley Clean Water Coalition
Green Science Policy Institute
GreenCAPE
League of Conservation Voters
Merrimack Citizens for Clean Water
National PFAS Contamination Coalition
Natural Resources Defense Council
NC Conservation Network
PFAS Community Campaign
Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families
Safer States
Sierra Club
Southern Environmental Law Center
Toxic-Free Future
Toxics Action Center
U.S. PIRG
Vermont Public Interest Research Group
Westfield Residents Advocating For Themselves (WRAFT)
Your Turnout Gear and PFOA