

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 5, 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
Chairman, Defense Appropriations
Subcommittee
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Ranking Member, Defense Appropriations
Subcommittee
711 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, and Ranking Member Durbin:

As you negotiate the FY2018 Defense Appropriations bill, we write to ask for your support for funding and programmatic language to help address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Exposure to these emerging contaminants has been linked to cancer as well as thyroid, kidney, liver, and reproductive problems.

In 2016, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established new lifetime health advisories for two types of PFAS -- Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS). The Department of Defense (DOD) has identified hundreds of active and former installations with known or suspected release of PFOS/PFOA that require investigation and remediation. In Michigan, unsafe levels of these chemicals have been discovered in and around Wurtsmith Air Force Base, Sawyer Air Force Base, the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center, Camp Grayling, and the Escanaba Defense Fuel Supply Point.

Section 316(a) of the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. No: 115-91) authorizes \$7 million for a study led by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), with support from the Environmental Protection Agency and DOD, on the health effects and cumulative impact of PFAS contamination in drinking water, groundwater, and other pathways. **We urge that no less than \$7 million be included for the study in the FY2018 defense spending bill.**

In addition, Section 316(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act directs the CDC and the ATSDR to conduct an exposure assessment of at least eight military installations that are known to have PFAS contamination in drinking and groundwater sources. The data collected as part of the assessment will help inform the national health study authorized in Section 316(a). However, it is our understanding that a technical change is needed to the National Defense Authorization Act to enable the DOD to use any appropriated funds to carry out the reviews authorized in both 316(a)

and 316(b). To that end, we ask that the following language be included in the FY2018 defense spending bill:

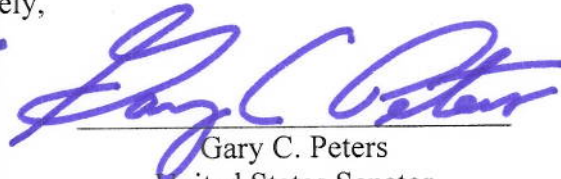
SEC. 80XX. Section 316(a)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (Public Law 115-91) is amended by striking "\$7,000,000 shall be available to carry out the study under this subsection" and inserting "the Secretary of Defense may, without regard to section 2215 of title 10, United States Code, transfer not more than \$7,000,000 to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out the study and assessment under this section."

Thank you for considering these requests. We hope that the requisite funding and programmatic language to help the Department of Defense address PFAS contamination in Michigan and nationwide are included in the FY2018 Defense Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator