

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 27, 2020

The Honorable John Henderson  
Assistant Secretary of the Air the Force  
Energy, Installations and Environment  
1160 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-1160

Dear Assistant Secretary Henderson:

We write to you concerning Dr. Stephen TerMaath's response letter on behalf of the U.S. Air Force (USAF) dated September 2, 2020, to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) regarding the Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) and Ambient Groundwater Quality Standards (AGQS) for four per- and polyflouroalkyl substances (PFAS) that were signed into law in New Hampshire this summer. While we are pleased the USAF has identified New Hampshire's MCLs and AGQS as potential "applicable or relevant and appropriate requirements" (ARARs) under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and appreciate the evaluation process, we are concerned about the timeline for making this evaluation and the potential risks to public health that exist in the meantime.

According to NH DES, there are five properties in the Town of Newington, New Hampshire participating in on-going private water supply well monitoring where samples have shown exceedances of the state's AGQS. Currently, the owners and residents of these properties have wells the state has deemed contaminated and have no permanent, alternative source of water. While we understand that ARARs are evaluated during the CERCLA remedy selection phase, it could be several years until Pease reaches that point in the process. Given the emerging science and what we know about the potential harmful impacts of PFAS accumulation in the body, we believe this timeline creates an unacceptable risk to the public. The stakes are too high for the people of Newington, many of whom have unknowingly consumed contaminated water for decades, to have to wait an additional 2-3 years for an evaluation to be completed and a decision to be made before they can access clean water. We believe action should be taken now to provide a clean, safe source of water for these five properties.

We appreciate the US Air Force's attention and continued work on PFAS contamination at the former Pease Air Force Base. While tremendous progress has been made on the former base, we cannot forget about private well owners in surrounding towns, like Newington, who still need protection from these dangerous chemicals. Please do not hesitate to contact Peter Clark in Senator Shaheen's Office ([peter\\_clark@shaheen.senate.gov](mailto:peter_clark@shaheen.senate.gov)), Kerry Holmes in Senator Hassan's Office

([kerry\\_holmes@hassan.senate.gov](mailto:kerry_holmes@hassan.senate.gov)) or Patrick Carroll in Congressman Pappas' Office ([patrick.carroll@mail.house.gov](mailto:patrick.carroll@mail.house.gov)) with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



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Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



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Maggie Hassan  
United States Senator



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Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress

Cc: Commissioner Robert Scott, NH Department of Environmental Services  
Mr. Michael Wimsatt, Director-Waste Management Division, NH Department of Environmental Services  
Dr. Stephen TerMaath, Chief-BRAC Program Management Division, US Air Force  
Ted Connors, Chair, Newington Board of Selectmen  
Ken Latchaw, Member, Newington Board of Selectmen  
Mike Marconi, Member, Newington Board of Selectmen  
Martha Roy, Town Administrator, Town of Newington