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**United States Senate**  
COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

December 8, 2025

The Honorable Steven Stebbins  
Acting Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Defense – Office of Inspector General  
4800 Mark Center Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22350-1500

Dear Acting Inspector General Stebbins:

As Ranking Member of the Senate's Chief Oversight Committee, I am writing today with concern for how the Department of Defense (DOD) is handling its per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) cleanup responsibilities nationwide.

I am pleased that the DOD Office of Inspector General (OIG) responded to my 2024 request and will soon be releasing a report evaluating DOD's interim actions to promptly reduce risk and mitigate the spread of PFAS.<sup>1</sup> I look forward to reviewing these findings as soon as possible. However, recent events necessitate an expeditious follow-up investigation.

In September, reporting uncovered that DOD delayed PFAS cleanups at nearly 140 military installations across the country, stalling progress at sites for up to a decade.<sup>2</sup> DOD released the revised cleanup schedule in September without a public announcement explaining these changes. Additionally, the revised timetable is dated March 31, 2025, but DOD waited roughly 6 months to make this information available.<sup>3</sup> DOD has a clear responsibility to address cleanup related to its own activities with urgency and transparency.<sup>4</sup> However, DOD's latest actions suggest a shirking of their responsibility and unnecessarily extend public health risks.

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<sup>1</sup> Memorandum from Randolph Stone, Assistant Department of Defense Inspector General for Evaluations, to Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Director of the Defense Logistics Agency, and Auditors General of the Army, Navy, and Air Force on the evaluation of DOD's interim actions to reduce risk and mitigate the spread of PFAS (Dec. 18, 2024) ([media.defense.gov/2024/Dec/27/2003619053/-1/-1/1/D2025-DEV0SR-0048.000\\_REDACTED.PDF](https://media.defense.gov/2024/Dec/27/2003619053/-1/-1/1/D2025-DEV0SR-0048.000_REDACTED.PDF)).

<sup>2</sup> *Defense Department Delays Cleanup of 'Forever Chemicals' Nationwide*, New York Times (Sept. 23, 2025) ([www.nytimes.com/2025/09/23/climate/military-defense-pfas-forever-chemicals-cleanup-delay.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/23/climate/military-defense-pfas-forever-chemicals-cleanup-delay.html)).

<sup>3</sup> Department of Defense, *Progress at the 723 Installations Being Assessed for PFAS Use or Potential Release* (March 31, 2025) ([www.acq.osd.mil/eie/ee/ecc/pfas/docs/data/DoD-PFAS-Progress-31MAR25.pdf](https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/ee/ecc/pfas/docs/data/DoD-PFAS-Progress-31MAR25.pdf)).

<sup>4</sup> Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), Pub L. 96-510.

Every American deserves access to clean, safe drinking water and should be able to rely on their government to promptly address imminent public health threats. Exposure to PFAS is associated with a range of harmful health effects, from increased risk of certain cancers to elevated cholesterol and blood pressure. I therefore request an urgent review of the delays announced by DOD, focusing on the following questions:

1. What factors, metrics, or other information did the Department of Defense assess in deciding to delay estimated completion dates for preparatory work at military installations, as documented in the March 31 document and released publicly in September?
  - a. What are the specific resource, staffing, or other constraints that the Department of Defense assessed in this decision-making process? How did those factors contribute to the decision to delay estimated completion dates?
  - b. What steps, if any, did the Department of Defense take to evaluate the potential impact on local communities that would result from these delays?
2. What steps, if any, did the Department of Defense take to communicate with local communities regarding potential cleanup delays prior to the timetables being amended and released publicly?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. If you or members of your staff have any questions, please contact Chelsea Davis on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee staff at (202) 224-2627.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator  
Ranking Member, Committee  
on Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs