



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2020

The Honorable Barbara M. Barrett
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Secretary Barrett:

I would like to follow up with you after my comments at the most recent Wurtsmith Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting on April 15, 2020.

As I'm sure you are aware, the people of Oscoda have been dealing with the effects of harmful per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in their water and waterways as a result of the use of the firefighting foam, by the U.S. Air Force, containing PFAS. For many years, the people of Oscoda have been fighting to clean up this harmful contamination, which has been met with nothing but resistance from the Air Force. This resistance from the Air Force is incredibly frustrating and unacceptable.

Congress recently passed the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which included additional money for the Air Force to clean up PFAS. After the NDAA's passage, on February 25, 2020, you wrote to Michigan's congressional delegation and stated that \$13.5 million would be allocated to former Wurtsmith Air Force base as a part of your BRAC clean up plan. I appreciate the Air Force allocated this money, the most it ever has for Wurtsmith.

During a recent RAB meeting, however, I was very concerned that the Air Force stated that this money appropriated by Congress will be used for more studies, rather than actual cleanup of harmful chemicals. Oscoda residents have waited years for the Air Force to clean up these 'forever' chemicals. Simply put, additional studies and surveys are unnecessary and duplicative. It's time for the Air Force to stop studying and start acting.

Under the law, interim measures are called for when there is an imminent and substantial endangerment of public health or the environment. We already know that substantial endangerment exists from PFAS contamination near Wurtsmith. Currently, there is a health advisory for PFAS chemical foam on Van Etten Lake, where people swim and fish. There are also health advisories for deer, fish and all small game in Clark's Marsh and the Au Sable River. These health advisories clearly demonstrate an imminent and substantial danger that requires clean up action by the Air Force.

Additionally, the congressional intent of this money, provided to the Air Force under the NDAA, was clearly meant for PFAS remediation and cleanup. The people of Oscoda, and Congress, have waited for meaningful action by the Air Force to act. It is my hope that the Air Force immediately begins to use these funds for cleanup, as intended. If the Air Force fails to do so, I will not hesitate to push additional congressional action to compel the Air Force to act.

I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you soon about the Air Force's plans to urgently act to clean up PFAS chemical contamination in Oscoda.

Sincerely,



Daniel T. Kildee
MEMBER OF CONGRESS