

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

August 26, 2022

The Honorable Lloyd Austin III
Secretary of Defense
1300 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1300

Dear Secretary Austin:

We contact you further to address continuing concerns with the ongoing health impacts of the Red Hill fuel leaks.

As you know, portions of the November 2021 leak of an estimated 19,000 gallons of jet fuel contaminated the military's drinking water system and affected roughly 100,000 individuals. We also do not know if contamination and health-related impacts occurred earlier as a result of the May 2021 leak or otherwise. In January and February 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry surveyed 2,289 military and civilian residents in the affected area. Of those surveyed, 1,980 (87%) reported new or worsening health symptoms after the November 2021 fuel leak. In addition, 1,049 participants (53%) reported mental health symptoms, including anxiety, irritability, difficulty sleeping, depression, paranoia, and tension or nervousness.

Although the military has provided medical assistance, hotlines and other support to affected servicemembers and their families, many members of our community continue to raise concerns in public meetings and to our offices about illnesses they believe they developed from drinking contaminated water. They further believe they are suffering long-term health effects from the leaks, and many strongly believe their concerns are not being fully and sufficiently acknowledged and addressed. They also express concern that they are not being provided sufficient information on prior and current water quality testing and reports and, when any such information is provided, it is too technical to be easily and fully understood.

Despite what the military has done or believes it has done to date to address related health concerns, a concerning and persistent number of servicemembers and their families do not believe it has been enough. We ask that you direct a full review of the military's response to date, including (1) the sufficiency of avenues for residents to address their concerns with the military, (2) the quality, frequency and ease of understanding of testing and other information being provided to the community, (3) the access to full medical consultation and care for those who believe their health has been affected, and (4) the full documentation of current health concerns for potential action if and when later illnesses manifest.

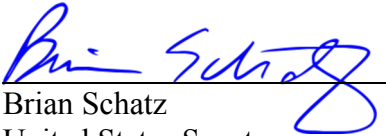
We remain fully committed to assisting you in these efforts. The Hawai'i Congressional delegation has already secured over a billion dollars to address this crisis, including remediation

and resident health concerns, and we are in the process of securing more. Specifically, the House voted to provide an additional billion-plus dollars for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, and both the House and the Senate versions of the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) include authority for this additional billion-plus dollar expenditure. Further, the House version of the FY 2023 NDAA includes provisions directing tracking of the long-term health implications of the Red Hill fuel leaks. This would be done in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Hawai'i Department of Health to ensure a holistic and unified approach that documents and help determine how to addresses illnesses affecting service members, dependents and civilians.


We are prepared to work with you to fully address any and all health concerns. Please advise us as to your efforts to date and how specifically we can assist further.


Thank you very much for your attention.

With Aloha,


Brian Schatz
United States Senator


Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator


Ed Case
Member of Congress


Kaiuli Kahele
Member of Congress