

Hello, I want to thank Chairman Rouda and Ranking member James Comer and the committee for this Hearing and allowing me to testify. I was born and raised in El Paso County, Colorado, around a large loving family, many whom are U.S. military veterans.

However, we are struggling to obtain justice and accountability for our family members and their neighbors-dead or suffering from cancer and other diseases after firefighting foam (AFFF) containing toxic Perfluorinated chemicals (PFAS) from nearby Peterson Air Force Base (AFB) contaminated their drinking & ground water for decades; which began in the early 1970s, remaining unbeknownst to the public until 2016.

In addition to these toxic chemicals causing contamination by migrating underground off-base to nearby civilian drinking water sources, Peterson AFB officials now say they also dumped these toxic PFAS chemicals into our community's drinking water source, several times a year, from 1990 until 2016.

This resulted in not only extremely high levels of PFAS in the drinking water, far exceeding the EPA's non-enforceable health advisory, but also in the blood of residents, 10 times higher than the national average.

Some of our PFAS drinking water levels were more than 100 times higher than the EPA's non-enforceable health advisory.

Subsequently, in my family, we've had 16 family members diagnosed with cancer who resided for significant time within these toxic PFAS drinking water contaminated residential areas

of Widefield, Security, Fountain, and Stratmoor; including my father in 2017, at least 4 of these family members have died of kidney cancer, which has been linked to PFAS drinking water contamination by scientists and U.S. courts.

These cancer deaths permanently separated mothers, fathers, and grandparents from their children and grandchildren.

And a few years ago, we had a teenage cousin who required a kidney transplant.

Because kidney cancer occurred on both sides of my family, including one who married into our family, it cannot be explained by genetics. Also, no family living outside the PFAS contamination areas have been diagnosed with kidney cancer.

Included among my affected family members, are at least 7 U.S. military veterans who themselves, along with their spouses and children, were being poisoned by these toxic PFAS chemicals from Peterson AFB via their tap water while they were on active duty and/or deployed to fight for our country in Iraq.

Indeed, there's a picture of 2 of our family members together in the middle east during the Iraq war, while deployed with the U.S. Army, meanwhile back in Colorado, their loved ones were being poisoned by Peterson AFB dumping toxic PFAS chemicals into Fountain Creek, their drinking water supply source.

We also have several family members, military veterans, who are buried in Fort Logan National Cemetery, along with their

spouses, but not buried there due to lethal wounds they received when they served in our military during World War 2, the Korean War, and Vietnam, but instead, dead from cancer, after having their drinking water contaminated with toxic PFAS chemicals for decades here in the United States.

So, imagine surviving World War 2, the Korean or Vietnam war as a U.S. military service member, only to come home safe, but then after years of unknowingly drinking toxic PFAS chemicals via your own tap water, be diagnosed with deadly cancer, and in the case of Leonard M. Haynes, not only are you stricken with a deadly cancer, but so are your wife, child, and grandchild.

A grandchild who at the age of 39, was buried just last year, dead from cancer, leaving behind 2 daughters and husband.

And we just buried my aunt Ivory in Fort Logan last month after battling kidney cancer.

Colorado Health Department investigators found that lung, bladder, and kidney cancer rates significantly higher than expected in these same areas of the PFAS water contamination.

Yet, the State of Colorado has never offered contaminated residents medical monitoring or PFAS Blood level tests nor instituted legally enforceable statewide PFAS drinking water levels. And when Colorado instituted a site-specific PFAS groundwater standard, the Pentagon said it would not apply to the military because they have sovereign legal immunity.

For decades, warnings about PFAS dangers to human health from both their own scientists and the Pentagon were ignored by the Air Force:

- In 1991, Defense Department agency, the U.S Army Corp of Engineers asked Fort Carson, a U.S. Army base that's just a 10-minute drive from Peterson AFB, to stop using the toxic PFAS-laden AFFF Firefighting foam and replace it with something non-hazardous.
- In 1997: "An Army study tells soldiers to treat the firefighting foam as hazardous waste. "In large volumes, AFFF foam can be harmful to the environment. AFFF solution should not be allowed to flow untreated into the ecosystem, or into the sewage systems in large quantities."

The Defense Department didn't wait for EPA guidance those times, so why now?

- So here we have 2 U.S. military bases in the same county, 10 minutes apart, a DoD agency asks one to replace their AFFF in 1991 because its toxic, while across town the other base thinks it's a good idea to dump that same toxic PFAS material into the nearby civilian drinking water source on a regular basis?

Congress must enact these PFAS Solutions-

- Regulate the nearly 5,000 different PFAS chemicals as a class and set legally enforceable limits.

- Enact into law all the current PFAS provisions passed by the House in the NDAA 2020.
- Provide medical care and monitoring to all those exposed to PFAS water contamination.
- Transparency-The Pentagon must immediately release all their test results of PFAS water levels taken from civilian water sources, and not just PFOS and PFOA, but all the other PFAS chemicals tested such as PFHxS. The Air Forces tells us they'll release information on a need to know basis.
- Conduct a comprehensive investigation of both the military and civilian PFAS contamination throughout the U.S. to learn how to prevent this from happening.
- Currently, If I wanted to sell PFAS as a medicine, I would have to wait for several years of testing to prove its safe before applying to the FDA, however, I can immediately discharge these of these same toxic PFAS chemicals in large amounts into our nation's public drinking water supply because there are no legally enforceable limits. Does that make any sense?

Therefore, Congress should immediately pass new laws that anyone discharging chemicals into our drinking and groundwater must first prove those chemicals are safe, just like the FDA's current method for approving medicines. Make polluters pay!

If these solutions are not enacted, then more adults, children and military service members will continue to be harmed by these toxic PFAS chemicals like my family and many others across our nation that are members of the National PFAS Coalition.

Our family will continue to serve in our military as we have done for generations, so we want them free from toxic hazards like PFAS.

Thank you. I'm ready to answer your questions.

Sincerely,
Mark A. Favors