

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Dr. Patrick N. Breyse, PhD, CIH
Director, National Center for Environmental Health
and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Atlanta, GA 30333

July 29, 2016

Dear Director Breyse:

As you know, Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) amounts above Lifetime Health Advisory (LHA) levels set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have been reported in public and private drinking wells at and around the former Naval Air Warfare Center Warminster, former Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove, and Horsham Air Guard Station in Pennsylvania. We, along with Senators Casey and Toomey have been in contact with the Department of the Navy requesting health monitoring and blood testing for the local community and former base employees who may have been adversely affected by the water contamination.

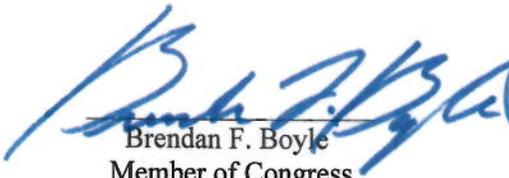
In response, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy Karnig Ohannessian explained that, after consultation with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), blood testing should not be conducted in these communities. We believe basic testing and monitoring of base employees and local residents is necessary to evaluate and monitor the long-term effects of the drinking water contamination, particularly in light of evolving science. What are the ATSDR's reasons for not recommending these blood tests? Under what circumstances would ATSDR recommend such testing and monitoring in our communities?

Nearly 70,000 Pennsylvanians may have been exposed to PFOA and PFOS through municipal and private drinking water in the Horsham, Warrington, and Warminster communities. The last ATSDR health assessment conducted at the Horsham Air Guard Station, Naval Air Warfare Center and surrounding areas in 2002 did not reference potential health hazards specifically associated with PFOA, PFOS, or other perfluorinated compounds. These contaminants were discovered on and near the property after 2002. In light of this timing, does the ATSDR plan to conduct a new health assessment on these bases and surrounding areas to address this known contamination event? Will the ATSDR perform focused Health Consultations with local residents or military personnel under its discretionary authority? We respectfully request that ATSDR do so.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been measuring PFOA and PFOS in the U.S population since 1999 as part of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. However, the long-term effects from exposure to these chemicals, including ingestion through drinking water, are relatively unknown. The Department of the Navy has called for a "carefully planned health research study" by the CDC and ATSDR to better understand the human health effects of these chemical exposures. We agree, and believe that making the public aware of the potential adverse health effects from exposure to these chemicals is an important ATSDR responsibility. Does the ATSDR plan to study the long-term human health effects of PFOA and PFOS? We respectfully request that ATSDR do so. We are aware that ATSDR has issued a draft Toxicological Profile for Perfluoroalkyls that includes PFOA and PFOS. The public comment period on the draft closed on December 1, 2015. What is the status of the final Toxicological Profile and its public release?

We appreciate the ATSDR's ongoing efforts to better understand the human health impacts of exposure to perfluorinated compounds and take necessary actions to protect public health. Thank you in advance for your response to our questions.

Sincerely,



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Patrick Meehan
Member of Congress



Michael Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

Cc:

Ray Mabus, Secretary, U.S. Navy

Deborah L. James, Secretary, U.S. Air Force

Karnig Ohannessian, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Navy (Environment)

Gregory C. Preston, Director, BRAC Program Management East, U.S. Navy

Tom Wolf, Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Dr. Karen Murphy, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Health