Legislation & Communication Committee

Report on Activities From Washington, D.C.

Item 6e

October 13, 2025

Legislation & Communications Committee

Report on Activities from Washington, D.C.

Subject

Report on Activities from Washington, D.C.

Purpose

To provide a legislative update.

Legislation & Communications Committee

Government Shutdown

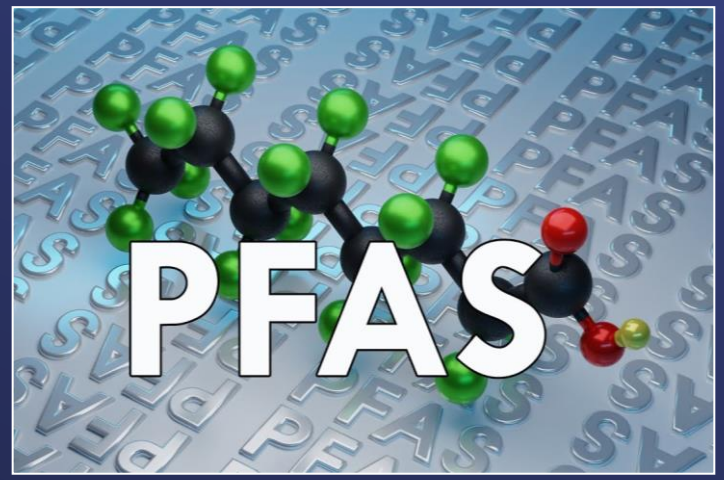
Water Resources Development Act 2026 Hearings

House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

Senate Environment & Public Works Committee

Legislation & Communications Committee

National Defense Authorization Act Update



United States Senate

September 24, 2025

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hegseth,

We write to demand answers on the Department of Defense's (DOD) decision to delay its clean-up of per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) pollution from military bases in Massachusetts and around the country. Certain PFAS—known as "forever chemicals" for their ability to persist in our environment and in our bodies without breaking down—are linked to cancer, fertility issues, diabetes, liver and thyroid disease, developmental delays in children, and other harmful health outcomes. Communities on and near military bases are exposed to these dangerous chemicals at a higher rate, due in large part to the military's longstanding use of PFAS-containing firefighting foams and other industrial solvents. We urge the DOD to reverse its decision and restore the original remediation timetable, so our military families and neighbors will not have to worry about what additional years of exposure to PFAS will mean for their health.

DOD testing has confirmed that 586 military sites are contaminated by PFAS to the point to which a remediation process must be initiated.[1] This includes sites in Devens, Natick, Westfield, Sudbury, and Mashpee, Massachusetts. Under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), also known as the Superfund law, DOD must investigate and take action when it suspects a PFAS release.[2] In December 2024, the DOD laid out a plan to clean up these sites—but under your leadership, the Department released a new timetable this year that details its newfound intent to leave communities exposed to these chemicals for years to come.[3] Despite the DOD's responsibility to remediate and clean up its toxic pollution, the DOD is delaying its preparatory clean-up work at around 140 military sites with known PFAS releases. The average delay at these sites is five years, but some communities

[1] Environmental Restoration and Compliance, *PFAS Data: Cleanup of PFAS*, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (2025), https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/eer/ecc/pfas/data/cleanup-pfas.html.
[2] Environmental Restoration and Compliance, *PFAS 101: Overview of CERCLA*, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (2025), https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/eer/ecc/pfas/pfas101/cercla.html.
[3] *Progress at the 723 Installations Being Assessed for PFAS Use or Potential Release*, Department of Defense (Mar. 31, 2025), https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/eer/ecc/pfas/docs/data/DoD-PFAS-Progress-31MAR25.pdf.

Legislation & Communications Committee

Nominations Update

Dr. Andrea Travnicek
Assistant Secretary for Water and Science

Jessica Kramer
Assistant Administrator for Water

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
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