

United States Senate

December 15, 2022

Office of the Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652
Washington, DC 20350

Secretary Del Toro,

I write to you with concern for the well-being of families and members of the defense community living in housing at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam impacted by the Red Hill fuel contamination. It is crucial that their homes and appliances continue to be safe from previous fuel contamination and any potential subsequent incidents, and that they can feel confident that is the case. While I am pleased to see that the Navy has undergone efforts to provide for the safety of families who were exposed, it is imperative that the Navy continues to explore and execute on authorities available to it and its partners to ensure the long-term confidence and safety of residents at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

The Navy should work to ensure current and future tenants of military housing are notified about previous exposure of a unit to contamination. In the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act under section 2890, Congress included a tenants' bill of rights requiring landlords to provide prospective tenants with a maintenance summary dating back seven years, at least five business days before a lease is signed.

The Navy should require that remedial actions taken due to the Red Hill fuel spill within that time period are covered under the maintenance definition and are disclosed in this statutorily required disclosure. The Navy should conduct oversight to ensure that these notifications occur and that they are done in a timely and clear manner for prospective tenants' decision making.

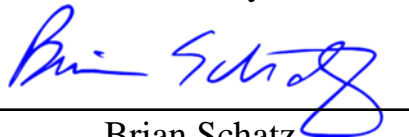
Furthermore, I urge you to take the maximum steps possible to ensure that any appliances in homes that have been damaged or impacted, due to having contaminated water in its system, are remediated to ensure the health and safety of tenants.

While I am encouraged by the rigorous inspections and repairs previously provided by the State of Hawai'i and the Navy for these items, residents must receive the necessary assurances and follow-up should there be any ongoing concerns with their respective homes. The Navy must continue to work with the community to rebuild confidence and ensure every reasonable request for the health and safety of our service members and their families are attended to.

Providing for the health and safety of the families of service members and the community that supports operations at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam is an essential component of maintaining the readiness of our forces supporting the Indo-Pacific. I look forward to working with you to ensure that the necessary resources are available and directed to protect the health and safety of our military families.

Thank you for your attention to this matter

Sincerely,



Brian Schatz
U.S. Senator

CC: Assistant Secretary for Energy, Installations, and Environment Meredith Berger