

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 9, 2021

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary,

We write to you today to request immediate attention from your office on the worsening PFAS contamination issues in the City of Tucson. As you are aware, Tucson is a desert city facing a historic drought. Any pollution in its already limited supply of drinking water must be taken seriously. Recent developments in the city's remediation efforts require immediate DoD support and participation.

The city of Tucson's drinking water supply is threatened by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). These substances have seeped into the community's groundwater supply downgradient from the Arizona Air National Guard Base at the Tucson International Airport. This plume is in addition to the one that has spread into the Tucson community downgradient from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. Both plumes require direct treatment to remove PFAS as Tucson is a closed basin water system in a federally designated Sole Source Aquifer.

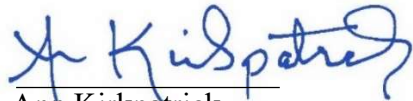
When PFAS was first detected, the city's existing water treatment plant, the Tucson Airport Remediation Project facility (TARP), was able to remove low levels of PFAS and has kept the water safe. This facility started treating water in 1994 to remediate TCE and 1,4-Dioxane from the Tucson International Airport superfund site. However, new data indicate PFAS in the groundwater wells serving the plant are approaching a limit at which Tucson Water can no longer operate the plant safely and will cause the City of Tucson to close the facility on June 21, 2021. The rising levels would create the risk of PFAS entering the drinking water system if operations were to continue without further measures in place. Sixty thousand customers receive water currently treated by the TARP facility.

The closure will force Tucson to depend more heavily on other limited drinking water sources to meet the community's needs, including water delivered from the Colorado River by way of the Central Arizona Project. However, climate change and current long-term drought have negatively impacted the water reservoirs of Lake Powell and Lake Mead. They are now at historically low levels, threatening the long-term sustainability of this water source.

Immediate action from all parties responsible for the PFAS groundwater pollution is needed to stop the spread of PFAS into the sole source aquifer. DoD has contributed to the PFAS

contamination of groundwater in the Tucson area from the use of AFFF for many decades. DoD has also failed to prioritize assistance and act as groundwater contamination continues to spread further into the Tucson community. The city of Tucson is doing everything it can to protect its residents, often at a great financial cost. It is past time for DoD to contribute to the solution. We request you accelerate any remaining remedial investigations, expedite clean-up actions, and prioritize the unique water source challenges this community faces.

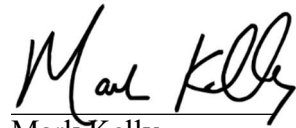
Sincerely,



Ann Kirkpatrick  
Members of Congress



Kyrsten Sinema  
United States Senator



Mark Kelly  
United States Senator



Tom O'Halleran  
Member of Congress



Raul Grijalva  
Member of Congress