

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

August 23, 2018

The Honorable Patrick Breysse
Director
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
4770 Buford Highway NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

Dear Director Breysse:

We are writing to encourage the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to take additional steps to assess per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination in the Merrimack area of Southern New Hampshire.

As you are aware, PFAS contamination has become a growing concern in communities across the United States and throughout New Hampshire. In early 2016, high-levels of PFAS contamination was discovered in public and private drinking water supplies in Merrimack and Litchfield, New Hampshire. A subsequent investigation by the State of New Hampshire revealed extensive PFAS contamination across five Southern New Hampshire towns.

Communities and families in the Merrimack area and across the state are understandably concerned with the long-term health impacts of exposure to PFAS from drinking water. ATSDR's involvement at sites like the former Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, has been critically important for community engagement and providing guidance and information to community members. While we appreciate the work that ATSDR is currently doing in New Hampshire to assess the health risks associated with PFAS exposure, we believe that additional community engagement is needed in the Merrimack area to fully address concerns and provide answers and guidance for local residents and their families.

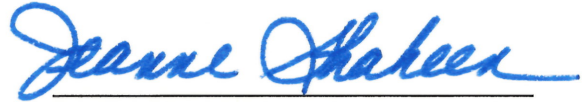
In particular, as ATSDR staff continues to work on its health consultation for the Merrimack area of Southern New Hampshire, we request that this work be expanded to include a more in-depth evaluation of community exposure, including biological monitoring of community members and an assessment of adverse health outcomes and health trends. In addition, we would also request that ATSDR assess the feasibility of convening a Community Assistance Panel (CAP) or similar community engagement forum for the Merrimack area. In other sites with similar PFAS contamination, like the former Pease Air Force Base, this forum has been an effective way to bring ATSDR and community members together to collaboratively address these critical issues, and would benefit Merrimack and the surrounding communities that have been impacted by PFAS contamination.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this letter. We look forward to working with you to provide exposed communities with necessary resources and guidance.


Sincerely,




Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress