



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON DC 20350-1000

June 7, 2012

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-4502

Dear Senator Leahy:

Thank you for your letter of March 29, 2012, regarding Camp Lejeune historic drinking water contamination. Secretary Panetta asked that I reply on his behalf to the concerns you expressed. I want to start by pledging my continued commitment to seeking answers to the many questions surrounding the historic water quality issue at Camp Lejeune, and my full support for the on-going efforts of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). Our service members, both current and former, their families, and our civilian employees deserve no less.

The welfare of our Marines, Sailors and their families has been and always will be a top priority for the Department. The Navy and Marine Corps continue to work with leading scientific organizations to seek science-based answers to the health questions that have been raised. Our dedication to action is evidenced by the fact that since 1991, the DON has provided more than \$30 million in funding to support scientific research initiatives. We support and fund ATSDR studies to investigate whether or not the diseases and disorders experienced by former residents are associated with their past exposure to the chemicals in the drinking water at Camp Lejeune.

Your letter references a future request for a Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General investigation regarding the use of "Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) exemptions and For Official Use Only designations to justify redactions." You state you will request that the DoD Inspector General "determine to what extent the Department of the Navy (DON) or the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) is requiring additional justifications from the ATSDR when documents to be cited have already been determined by the DON or the USMC to not require any redactions before public disclosure." We look forward to cooperating with these investigations. DoD is working to implement new processes in support of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012's authority on protection of critical infrastructure information. Consistent with the purposes of the Act, critical infrastructure data will be withheld under that exemption when "the public interest consideration in the disclosure of such information does not outweigh preventing the disclosure of such information."

With regard to your request that a "single copy of the un-redacted catalog and records contained within the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Consolidated Document Repository, formerly known as the 'Booz Allen Hamilton Document Repository,' be provided to Sen. Nelson's office," because this repository contains Privacy Act [personally identifiable] information, we may not release un-redacted records without an official request from a

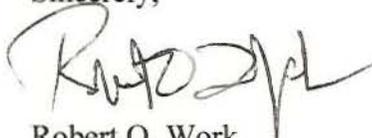
committee or subcommittee of jurisdiction in writing. I have directed that my staff contact your staff to further address this issue.

You also expressed concerns about the functionality of the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water website. Due to technical difficulties related to the web server being moved to a new geographic location, the website's "registry summary" page, which provides the total number of registrations by state and region, ceased updating automatically on December 20, 2011. It was repaired on March 28, 2012. The public, however, never lost the ability to register online. During this time period, approximately 2,700 additional persons registered online and their information is now contained in the database.

The Marine Corps is committed to proactively informing the public about available resources on Camp Lejeune drinking water. The Corps' comprehensive outreach and notification program includes a website, a call center, a notification database, targeted outreach via letters to former base residents and workers, and advertising in popular media outlets. To date we have sent well over 200,000 direct notifications and collected contact information from more than 179,000 persons who request updates as information becomes available.

I appreciate you bringing your concerns to DoD and the DON's attention. We will continue to fully support the ATSDR effort and do our best to reach out to and inform your constituents and our families on this important issue. There is nothing more important to the ultimate resolution of this issue than the timely completion of the ATSDR reports. A similar letter has been sent to each of your colleagues who also expressed an interest in this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert O. Work". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Robert O. Work
Acting