Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 28, 2026

The Honorable Troy Meink
Secretary
United States Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Meink,

We write to follow up on the fuel spill incident at Joint Base Andrews that was initially discovered in March 2026 and resulted in an estimated 22,000 gallons of jet fuel entering the surrounding environment, including nearby Piscataway Creek. After more than seven months, the Air Force has failed to fully contain the fuel spill, as demonstrated by continued signs of fuel contamination detected in Piscataway Creek by the Maryland Department of the Environment. This delay in fully addressing the fuel spill is unacceptable. The Air Force must take immediate action to completely contain the spill and stop all sources of continued fuel discharge into the environment, including by taking swift action to remediate contaminated soil and groundwater where necessary.

Water pollution from the Base directly impacts local communities that live along and recreate on Piscataway Creek, risking their health and ability to safely enjoy this natural resource. Piscataway Creek is a popular recreation destination for paddlers, boaters, and fishermen, and there are trails that run along the creek as well that offer hiking and bird watching. Piscataway Creek is also part of a landscape that is sacred to the Piscataway people, and the waterway runs by important cultural and historic sites.

The Air Force's delay in executing a full cleanup of the fuel spill is especially concerning given that this fuel leak compounds on other Joint Base Andrews activities that have degraded the health of Piscataway Creek – namely legacy PFAS runoff pollution from the Base. We appreciate that the Air Force is working closely with the Maryland Department of the Environment and has taken steps to address the fuel leak, but the pace of the Air Force's cleanup effort is inadequate in light of the seriousness of the situation and the history of environmental contamination around the Base.

Please provide responses to the following questions by November 12, 2026:

1. Will the Air Force commit to taking immediate action to stop continued environmental contamination caused by the fuel leak earlier this year?

2. The Air Force has stated that robust containment layers are holding strong but water sampling from the Maryland Department of the Environment has shown evidence of fuel

entering the waterway through the temporary containment berms erected at the Base, especially after heavy rainfall events. What steps will the Air Force take to ensure that no more fuel enters Piscataway Creek?

3. Of the 22,000 gallons of fuel that has potentially entered the environment:
    a. How much has been discharged into the creek?
    b. How much is contaminating the ground?
    c. How much has been recovered?

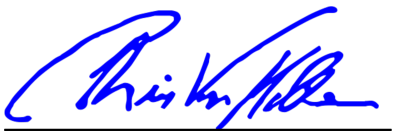
4. What is the timeline for full remediation of the fuel spill and subsequent contamination of Piscataway Creek?

5. Has the Air Force completed its subsurface investigation? If so, what are the expected next steps for remediating any soil and/or groundwater contamination?

6. Moving forward, how will the Air Force ensure that fuel leaks at Joint Base Andrews and other bases around the country are addressed and fully remediated in a timely manner?

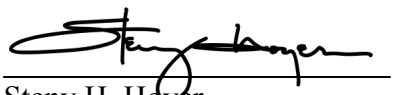
We appreciate your prompt attention to these questions and request a follow-up briefing for our offices and your detailed written response.

Sincerely,

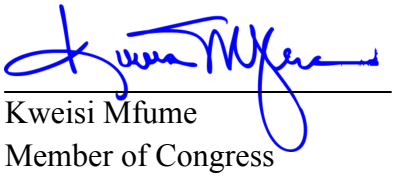


Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

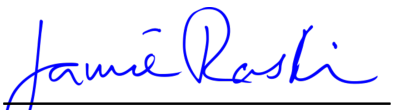
Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



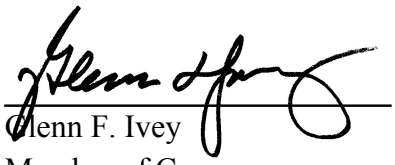
Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



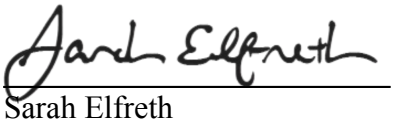
Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



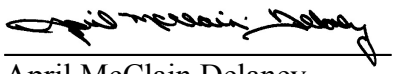
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



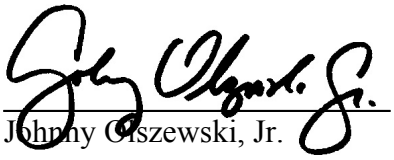
Glenn F. Ivey
Member of Congress



Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



Johnny Olszewski, Jr.
Member of Congress