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Sean Patrick Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
18th District, New York

October 4, 2019

Lieutenant General L. Scott Rice
Director of the Air National Guard
1670 Air Force, Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330

Dear Director Rice:

I am writing to express my deep concern at the lack of progress of the Recreation Pond filtration system installation process at Stewart Air National Guard Base in New Windsor, New York. I strongly urge you to immediately expedite this process and provide my office with an update on the status of the filtration system installation to affected communities in our district.

In March 2016, testing of Recreation Pond's water found abnormally and unacceptably high levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). As you know, PFAS are frequently found in aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) and the contamination likely came from the release of AFFF from Stewart Air National Guard Base. Recreation Pond is a tributary of Washington Lake, the City of Newburgh's drinking water source. While the residents of Newburgh currently have access to clean water, the ongoing contamination at Recreation Pond and the potential for further contamination of Washington Lake is extremely troubling.

I was encouraged by the Department of Defense's decision to install a filtration system at the dam surrounding Recreation Pond and that the announcement that within 6 months of awarding a contract in February 2019 water at Recreation Pond would start being filtered. However, it is now October and the filtration system is neither running nor has installation of this system even started. This means that PFAS contamination continues and poses an unacceptable risk to public health.

The filtration system installation on the dam surrounding Recreation Pond is vital to effectively remove PFAS contaminants in the local drinking water system and ensure the health and well-being of my constituents. Therefore, I urge you and all other involved agencies to prioritize the swift completion of this project and I request that you provide my office with updated timeline for the installation of the filtration system and anticipated commencement of water filtration.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Sean Patrick Maloney, consisting of a stylized 'S' and 'M' followed by a horizontal line.

Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress