



ALEX PADILLA

U.S. SENATOR *for* CALIFORNIA

The Clean Water For Military Families Act

The *Clean Water For Military Families Act* would require the Department of Defense (DOD) to conduct investigations and remediate PFAS contamination at and around DOD installations in the U.S. and state-owned National Guard facilities. It authorizes a one-time, \$10 billion investment for PFAS investigations and clean-up to ensure military families can drink clean water and live pollution-free.

Background:

According to DOD data compiled by the Environmental Working Group (EWG), there are [over 700 military sites](#) in all 50 states that are known or suspected to have polluted toxic PFAS chemicals into the environment. As of [May 2020](#), California has 62 military facilities with a known or suspected PFAS release.

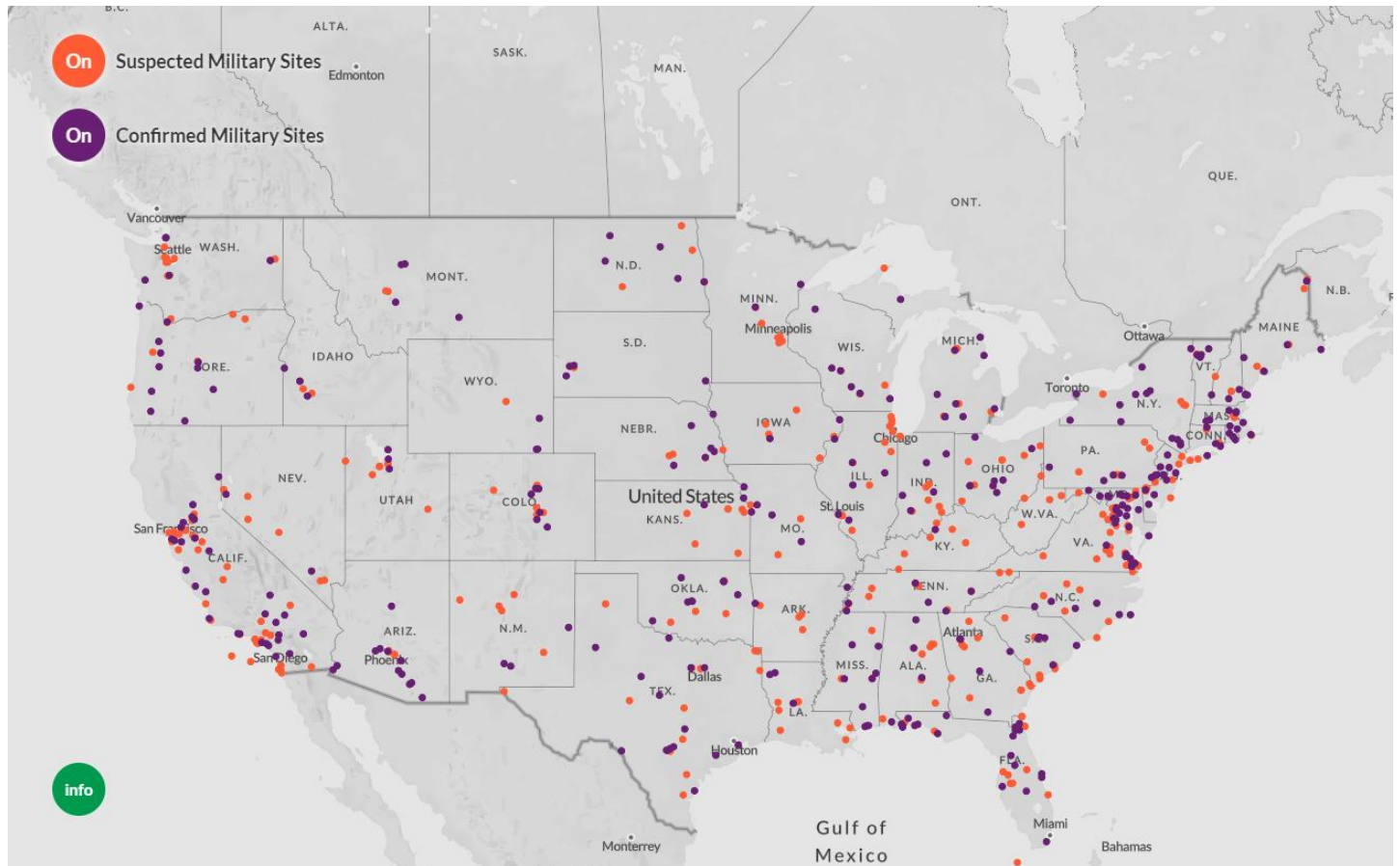
PFAS – a class of chemicals known as “[forever chemicals](#)” – can accumulate and stay in the human body and environment for long periods of time. [According to the EPA](#), there is evidence that exposure to PFAS can lead to adverse health outcomes, including effects on the immune system, cancer, thyroid hormone disruption, and low infant birth rates. The military’s heavy use of a firefighting foam called aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) has resulted in widespread PFAS contamination around military sites, impacting the communities who live nearby.

Dating back to the 1960s, the U.S. Navy began using AFFF firefighting foam containing PFAS. The military used AFFF firefighting foam for emergencies, fire training exercises, and equipment testing, resulting in large discharges of PFAS contamination in groundwater and other environments. For decades, DOD continued using AFFF firefighting foam despite the mounting evidence of detrimental health concerns, and even after leading manufacturers [voluntarily phased out](#) production of PFOS and PFOA, the two most [widespread and studied](#) PFAS compounds. In recent years, Congress has passed legislation requiring DOD to phase out the use of AFFF firefighting foams at military installations. While this is a vital step to ensuring DOD adopts PFAS-free alternatives, it does not address DOD’s legacy pollution. A full timeline of DOD’s history with PFAS can be found [here](#).

Impacts to Military Families:

The hundreds of contaminated military sites across the country jeopardize the health, safety, and well-being of military communities who have suffered from exposure to PFAS pollution and toxic drinking water. DOD’s existing clean-up efforts have largely focused on drinking water contaminated with PFOS and PFOA only, despite evidence of other compounds on military bases. The *Clean Water For Military Families Act* funds a historic \$10 billion investment to build upon and accelerate existing PFAS clean-up efforts and cover a larger class of PFAS chemicals. Absent this legislation, it [could take decades](#) for DOD to clean up toxic PFAS. No cleanup actions have been completed for the bases with the highest PFAS detections. We must act now to move beyond studying the problem and toward a comprehensive cleanup effort to protect military communities.

703 Military Sites With Known and Suspected Discharges of PFAS



[Map and data compiled by the Environmental Working Group.](#)

The sites with confirmed PFAS contamination were identified by EWG through Freedom of Information Act requests, Defense Department reports and public databases. The sites with suspected releases of PFAS chemicals were identified by the Department of Defense PFAS Task Force and mapped by EWG.