

Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin

Testimony

Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Environment, Member Day Testimony

FY21 Member Appropriations Priorities

March 10, 2020

Five Minute Remarks

- Thank you Subcommittee Chairwoman McCollum and Subcommittee Ranking Member Joyce for the opportunity to share my priorities for the Fiscal Year 2021 Interior and Environment appropriations package.
- As a former CIA officer and Pentagon official, security is the lens through which I see the world. That's why it's clear to me that we need to start treating environmental security like homeland security -- because it's about the safety of our families and the preservation of our way of life.
- Nowhere is this more clear than on the issue of PFAS contamination of our water, which has heavily affected communities across Michigan. If you have to worry that giving your child a glass of water will put them at risk of early childhood cancer, that is a threat to your safety. If you can't swim and fish as an adult in the lakes where you learned to swim and to fish as a kid, that is a threat to your way of life.
- That is why I'm so proud that I was able to pass 6 key provisions into law through the NDAA that, for the first time, hold the Pentagon accountable for doing more than simply studying the problem.
- These include requiring the DOD to transition off the PFAS-laden firefighting foam that is poisoning our communities, ensuring that funding is available for cleanup at National Guard bases like Selfridge Air National Guard base in Michigan, and making sure that military

firefighters are tested for PFAS exposure as part of their annual physical exam.

- However, the most consequential provision is the PFAS Monitoring Act, a bill that I introduced last May.
- Under my law, which was signed by President Trump in late December, large cities will be required to monitor almost 30 types of PFAS, and smaller communities under 10,000 people will get help to pay for that monitoring.
- 6 PFAS substances were included in EPA's testing requirements for 2013-2015, but they were not included in the 2018-2020 round of testing. My bill ensures that the next round of testing will cover all 29 PFAS chemicals that the EPA knows how to test for in drinking water.
- In Michigan, we are already diligently testing for PFAS, thanks to our Governor's leadership on this issue.
- But I want to make sure that it is a requirement at the federal level to monitor for PFAS across our communities. My bill will ensure that testing is required by federal law, irrespective of the state or local leadership, and it will expand the number of PFAS chemicals that we test for.
- This will not only help support ongoing PFAS monitoring efforts in my state, it will also help provide data to EPA and other state regulators to inform their decisions about PFAS.
- Now that my bill has been signed into law, I want to advocate today for the funds to implement it. In particular, I want to ensure that the EPA has sufficient funding to support smaller communities with PFAS testing. .

- I want to thank the committee for providing \$43 million in new PFAS-related funding for the EPA in the 2020 Fiscal Year -- including funding to support the EPA's testing of drinking water that will now cover PFAS under my bill.
- Today I ask that the committee increase funding in the 2021 Fiscal Year for the EPA programs that will support smaller communities in testing their drinking water.
- As the Committee considers the FY21 budget, I'd ask you to keep in mind the concerns of families in my district, across Michigan and across the nation. There is widespread concern about these chemicals. We must work to protect Americans against this threat -- just as we do from other threats to our security.
- Again, I thank the committee for their leadership on PFAS-related funding in FY20 and ask them to again increase PFAS-related funding in FY21.
- Thank you for your time and for allowing me to relay some of my priorities related to clean water that unite us all. I look forward to continuing to work with the Committee to support these priorities.