

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 2, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

We write to you today regarding the nearly 16,000 military personnel and veterans who were deployed to Karshi-Khanabad (K2) Air Base in Uzbekistan between 2001 and 2005. Military personnel stationed at K2 Air Base were, according to DOD's own reports, likely exposed to a range of toxic chemicals including depleted uranium, lead, asbestos, and other volatile compounds.

As you are probably aware, the FY2021 *National Defense Authorization Act* (P.L. 116-283) included in Sec. 751 the previous Green-Lynch bill's requirement for the Department of Defense (DoD) to study toxic exposure by servicemembers deployed to K2 Air Base between 2001-2005. The recently enacted *Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act* (P.L. 116-315) also included in Sec. 2010 a requirement for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to partner with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to conduct an epidemiology study and permitted K2 veterans' access to the burn pit registry.

Furthermore, on January 19, 2021, former President Donald Trump issued Executive Order 13982, which ordered the DOD in consultation with VA to conduct a study with additional specified details. Importantly, Executive Order 13982 also ordered DoD and VA to consider designating these heroes as having served on active duty in a theater of combat operations for the purposes of receiving medical care.

K2 is a former Soviet military base that was used as a logistics and air base by U.S. forces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. During this time, American servicemembers deployed to K2 Air Base served valiantly in defense of our nation. Sadly, nearly two decades later, many of these warriors are now experiencing severe negative health events including 500% higher rates of particular cancers, reproductive issues, and neurological impacts. With the tremendous sacrifices of these servicemembers in mind, we would ask that your administration work diligently to ensure the faithful execution of Executive Order 13982, Sec. 751 of the FY2021 NDAA, and Sec. 2010 of P.L. 116-315.

We look forward to working with your administration to ensure that our nation's servicemembers who served at K2 Air Base have access to the high-quality medical care they earned for the ailments they are suffering. Thank you for your leadership. We stand ready to assist in any way we can with these efforts.

Sincerely,



STEPHANIE BICE
Member of Congress



MARK E. GREEN, M.D.
Member of Congress

BILL POSEY
Member of Congress

MATT GAETZ
Member of Congress

DEAN PHILLIPS
Member of Congress

CHRIS PAPPAS
Member of Congress

DON BACON
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KIM SCHRIER, M.D.
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JOHN ROSE
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