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## **CARDIN TELLS DOD TO STOP THE DELAYS AT FORT MEADE**

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)**, at a hearing of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) today, expressed his frustration with the Department of Defense for their continued unwillingness to obey the law in cleaning up waste sites, such as Fort Meade.

“The law is clear and the Department of Defense cannot continue to ignore it. A detailed plan for cleaning up Fort Meade was due nine years ago,” said Senator Cardin, who chaired part of today’s hearing. “The Department should drop its legal appeals, obey the EPA order, and quickly sign the required base-wide clean-up plan. The health and welfare of Marylanders are at risk, including the brave men and women who serve our nation inside and outside the gates of Fort Meade.”

“For the first time in its history, the State of Maryland is moving forward with a suit to compel the Army to comply with the EPA’s order. I am hopeful that the Department of Defense left today’s hearing with a clear sense that it cannot continue to delay. They must get on with the important cleanup work ahead of them.”

During the hearing, Senator Cardin pointed out that the Superfund Law requires a Federal Facilities Agreement between EPA and DoD governing the cleanup of the site. According to law, it must be signed within 180 days of the site being listed on the National Priorities List. The Army, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the State of Maryland have been working to clean up the site since 1993. Because of the severity of the contamination, EPA listed Fort Meade on the National Priority List of Superfund sites in 1998. Much clean-up work has occurred on the site, especially in the early years. But the pace of the cleanup has slowed. In recent years it has been especially difficult to get the Army to commit to additional actions.

Written testimony from the EPA, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Energy witnesses all say that under Section 120 of the Superfund statute, federal facilities are required to comply with the law in the same manner, both substantively and procedurally, as private entities. The same holds true for the other major law governing waste, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, or RCRA. Yet, as of this date, the Army has been unwilling to enter into an

agreement with the EPA that would govern investigation and remedial activities at Fort Meade going forward.

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