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SENATOR CARDIN ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT TO CLEAN UP CONTAMINATION AT FT. MEADE

Senator Pushed all Parties to Finalize a FFA Agreement by June

WASHINGTON – After working for months to get all parties to agree, **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD) today announced that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Interior and the Architect of the Capitol have signed a federal facilities agreement (FFA) to remediate the Superfund sites that are located on or near Ft. Meade.

“I am pleased that after nine years, a formal agreement has been reached regarding the cleanup of contaminated sites at Ft. Meade,” said Senator Cardin, who is a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW). “The agreement recognizes EPA’s role as ultimate arbiter of cleanup standards and provides an enforceable framework for the Army to complete all remaining work at the Fort.”

In 1998, EPA listed Ft. Meade on the National Priorities List (Superfund), which requires a Federal Facilities Agreement (FFA) to be signed to provide a legal agreement governing the cleanup. Under the Superfund law, the FFA grants EPA final authority over cleanup decisions, but under the Bush Administration the DoD resisted efforts to negotiate the document. In May 2008, the DoD sought a legal opinion from the Department of Justice that it could evade the requirements of the Superfund law.

The Ft. Meade contamination includes 14 contaminated sites on the military campus and three sites on the property that were transferred from Ft. Meade to the Patuxent Research Refuge property. Contaminated groundwater that has migrated off base will also be addressed. Cleanup activities have been on-going, but community members have expressed concern that without an FFA, the work has lacked appropriate supervision by the EPA.

In August 2007, EPA issued a unilateral enforcement order requiring the Army to address all pollution “releases” which may present an imminent and substantial endangerment to health or the environment at Ft. Meade and adjoining properties.

At Senator Cardin's request, on September 18, 2008, the Environment and Public Works Committee held an oversight hearing on cleanups at federal facilities under the Superfund law. At the hearing, Senator Cardin pressed the Department of Defense to address the cleanup at Fort Meade and to agree to EPA oversight. In December 2008, the State of Maryland filed a citizen suit seeking to compel the Army to comply with the EPA order.

*"Ft. Meade has a long and proud history and today marks another positive chapter," said **Senator Cardin**, who also chairs EPW's Water and Wildlife Subcommittee. "The agreement represents a clear commitment by all parties to ensure the health and safety of Ft. Meade and the surrounding community."*

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