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Senator Carl Levin
269 Russell Office Building
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510-2202

Dear Senator Levin,

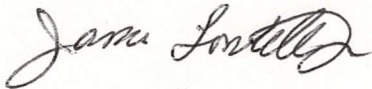
Hopefully, by now you are aware of the issues surrounding the Camp Lejeune North Carolina drinking water contamination tragedy. I have been told by many of my fellow Camp Lejeune victims that their Congressional representatives are suggesting to them that the Camp Lejeune drinking water contamination incident is a North Carolina issue and that they should address their questions to the North Carolina delegation. Senator, nothing could be further from the truth! According to the Marine Corps, there are currently 2,933 Michigan residents (enclosure 1) now registered with the United States Marine Corps Camp Lejeune water survey because of their exposures while aboard the base. Like many of my fellow Marines and their dependents, I am not from North Carolina. I was stationed aboard the base during my time of service in the United States Marine Corps and returned to my home state of Michigan after I was honorably discharged from active duty on 26 April 1967.

Senator, you can not imagine the shock and absolute horror I experienced after I was diagnosed with male breast cancer in 1998 at the age of 52. Male breast cancer is an extremely rare disease and when it strikes, it is usually found in men over the age of 65. I know of ten other men with the disease who either lived or were stationed aboard the base during the contamination period. I only discovered my exposure to the contamination when one of these other male breast cancer victims contacted me after he saw my survival story and photograph (enclosure 2) on the internet.

In fact, it literally took an act of Congress in 2007 to force the Marine Corps to begin notifying the service men and women, their families and civilian employees of the base of their possible exposure. The Marine Corps has known about this issue since at least October of 1980 and up until last year, has done little to warn us of our exposures. What is most appalling is that the Marine Corps had regulations in place beginning in 1963 (enclosure 3), which if followed, would have prevented most of the human exposures aboard the base.

It is my understanding that Senator Hagan has suggested a hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee concerning the Camp Lejeune drinking water contamination. I can not think of an issue that is more deserving of a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing than the poisoning of an estimated 1,000,000 Marines, Sailors, their families and civilian employees of the base by the very organization they volunteered to serve in the defense of our nation.

Sincerely,



James Fontella

Enclosure 1. United States Marine Corps Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Registrants by State Breakdown.

Enclosure 2. Photograph of James Fontella Jr. taken by Patty Izzo.

Enclosure 3. Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Instruction 6240.3B September 1963