

United States Senate

January 24, 2023

The Honorable Lloyd Austin
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Austin,

I write to stress the importance of the ongoing investigation into the possible increased likelihood of cancer for missileers at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls, Montana. I urge the Department of Defense to re-examine previous studies and expand the current investigation, which is monitoring and screening current and former missileers. It must be a priority to ensure that our nuclear readiness is sufficient and that missile combat crews are safe from nuclear radiation exposure.

Malmstrom's intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) are a vital component of America's nuclear triad that deter our enemies and keep America and our allies secure. As the Department of Defense continues to modernize our ICBM weapon system and prepares to transition and activate the new LGM-35A GBS (Sentinel), it is imperative to review any and all shortcomings of the previous Minuteman III systems, and their deployment sites, to ensure that the Sentinel system provides a safe and secure environment for our nation's missileers, service crews, and security personnel.

I request to be provided:

- An in-depth briefing as to the current investigation, and any possible complications for servicemembers;
- That the current DoD investigation review and expand the scope of the 2001 Air Force Institute for Operational Health (AFIOH), previously Air Force Institute for Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health Risk Analysis (AFIERA), study which conducted a site evaluation and sampling for possible chemical and biologic contaminants at Malmstrom AFB;
- Ensure the findings of the investigation includes a recommendation to Congress on any linkages between service and cancer that need to be addressed with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I appreciate the DoD's work to ensure the safety and appropriate care for Malmstrom's missile combat crew and veterans. Please keep my office informed of any findings and updates as the DoD reviews the Minuteman III systems and implements the new Sentinel weapons system.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines
United States Senator