Background

We take great pride that the United States military is the best trained fighting force in the world. Decades of military training, however, have left dangerous explosives and harmful chemicals on millions of acres across the country.

This contaminated real estate is located *in every state and Congressional district,* much of it near housing, schools, parks, and playgrounds. While Congress has established the Defense Environmental Restoration Program-Formerly Used Defense Site Program (DERP-FUDS) in 1986 to remove hazardous material from former Department of Defense (DOD) properties, a tremendous amount of work and remediation remains to be done. Now, over two decades later, 2,600 properties nationwide still require cleanup in order to be safely reused at an estimated cost of over $18 billion.

Current funding for the program is less than $300 million annually – one half of one percent of base Defense spending. At this rate of spending, the Department estimates it will finish cleaning these sites within the next *250 years*.

Solution

To help the Department of Defense become a better partner with states and local communities, Congressman Blumenauer has worked to preserve and increase DOD efforts to employ skilled

labor and high-tech companies to clean up these dangerous liabilities. In addition to increasing safety, these cleaned up sites will provide new opportunities for economic development, parks and other options for local communities.

Recently, Congressman Blumenauer has led efforts to restore DERP-FUDS funding to ensure that we can continue work removing this danger from our communities within our lifetime – not our great grandchildren's. By giving the DOD the necessary tools to clean up after itself, we are not only saving taxpayer dollars in the long run, but returning previously toxic, unusable lands to productive use.

<Previous Idea

Next Idea>