

Washington, DC - Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) will speak at a Department of Defense sponsored symposium on "Meeting the DoD's Environmental Challenges," the largest gathering of military experts and concerned citizens devoted to unexploded ordnance (UXO) and military base cleanup, on Tuesday, November 30 at 9:00 a.m. at the Marriott Wardman Woodley Park Hotel at 2660 Woodley Road. Blumenauer has been a champion of increased funding for cleaning up UXO, the explosive waste left behind on defense sites, arguing that the DoD has been slow to return formerly used defense sites to beneficial uses and Congress has not properly funded clean up efforts.

"The millions of acres and thousands of facilities potentially contaminated by bombs and toxins present a unique challenge and unprecedented opportunity to strengthen America's military," said Blumenauer. "As the Department of Defense has become the world's largest manager of infrastructure, consumer of energy, and the owner of the most Superfund sites in America, the potential impacts are staggering."

In his speech, titled "In Defense of Sustainability," Blumenauer will suggest an approach to accelerate clean up, enhance both safety and military readiness, save tens of billions of dollars, and fundamentally transform the relationship between the Armed Forces and its many neighbors and partners. In the past, the Department of Defense has been a powerful change agent in areas as diverse as race relations and technological innovation. Blumenauer will argue that by dealing aggressively and comprehensively with its cleanup obligations, a "greener military" will not only make the United States safer and stronger, but also restore the Pentagon to its role as a societal leader, this time in the vanguard of making American communities more sustainable.