

Core Sampling at Joint Base San Antonio Report Language

The Committee notes that Joint Base San Antonio is served by a wastewater pipeline, known as W-6 that is subject to a Consent Decree with the Environmental Protection Agency requiring its replacement. The local utility providing wastewater service is the San Antonio Water System, an agency of the City of San Antonio, Texas. This pipeline is critical to the functional wastewater system of Joint Base San Antonio, the City of San Antonio, and Bexar County. The Committee believes that the timely replacement of the pipeline is in the best interests of both Joint Base San Antonio and the community. The proposed route of the replacement pipeline would traverse a part of the base that contains capped and closed landfills with uncertain contents. The committee understands that the Air Force and the City are currently at an impasse on the liability for any contamination discovered during site investigations of the proposed pipeline route and during construction and maintenance and operation of a new pipeline. Given the hazards posed by the condition of the existing pipeline to the population on Joint Base San Antonio, and the legal requirements for replacing the pipeline under the Consent Decree, the Committee encourages the Secretary of the Air Force to work with the City of San Antonio toward an amicable and rapid resolution.

To establish an estimate of liability that will allow informed decisions, the Committee encourages the Secretary of the Air Force to conduct core sampling along the proposed route of the new pipe to determine if any regulated or hazardous substances are present in the soil along the proposed route and the concentrations of any such substances. Furthermore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to provide a briefing to the House Armed Services Committee, not later than September 30, 2018, on the whether or not the Air Force performed such core sampling and the results of the core sampling performed. If the Air Force did not perform such core sampling, the briefing shall include a detailed explanation for the reasons such sampling was not performed. At the time of the briefing, the Secretary should also provide an update on the status of negotiations with the San Antonio Water System and proposed way-ahead for the site investigations and construction of the W-6 replacement pipeline.”