



Statement for the Record

by the

NATIONAL MILITARY FAMILY ASSOCIATION

for

**Joint Subcommittee on
Personnel & Readiness**

of the

**UNITED STATES SENATE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

February 13, 2019

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The Committee

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is the leading nonprofit dedicated to serving the families who stand behind the uniform. Since 1969, NMFA has worked to strengthen and protect millions of families through its advocacy and programs. We provide spouse scholarships, camps for military kids, and retreats for families reconnecting after deployment and for the families of the wounded, ill, or injured. NMFA serves the families of the currently serving, retired, wounded or fallen members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Commissioned Corps of the USPHS and NOAA.

Association Volunteers in military communities worldwide provide a direct link between military families and the Association staff in the Nation's capital. These volunteers are our "eyes and ears," bringing shared local concerns to national attention.

The Association does not have or receive federal grants or contracts.

Our website is: www.MilitaryFamily.org.

FROM THE NATIONAL MILITARY FAMILY ASSOCIATION

The United States military is the most capable fighting force in the world. For almost two decades of war, service members and their families never failed to answer the call, steadfastly sacrificing in order to protect our Nation. They made these sacrifices trusting that our government would provide them with resources to keep them ready; however, the Services and Department of Defense (DoD) have failed them.

In our Association's **March 29, 2001** testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies on Quality of Life Issues for Military Families, we stated:

Although we see the need for the infusion of private capital to revitalize military housing, NMFA has watched early privatization efforts with some concerns:

- *Where are the standards for oversight of the development process and the outcome measures to gauge a project's long-term costs and benefits?*
- ***Who provides oversight of housing management and maintenance?***
- ***What is the role of the installation commander?***
- *How is community input sought and used in the process?*
- ***Who is the advocate for family members living in the housing?***
- *How are the projects' effects on servicemembers' budgets and community services evaluated and calculated into project plans?*
- *Where is the priority for preserving the things that make a "military community" strong when the military no longer "owns" the houses in that community?*

Although we understand the need for project flexibility to meet the needs of local installations and communities, NMFA asks Congress to continue its oversight of the privatization process and work with DoD and the Services to establish a common core set of standards and outcome measures for privatization projects. We were encouraged by DoD's discussion of the development of the Program Evaluation Plan as a tool to evaluate financial and management information about privatization projects.

*Mr. Chairman, NMFA shares the concerns you have voiced on how best to guarantee a contractor's performance over the long-term. We believe that oversight is essential, not only to look after the government's interest, but also the interests of the families who live in the privatized housing. We know that part of the current housing crunch can be laid to the fiscal irresponsibility of the services in not properly maintaining their real estate and infrastructure. We also know that one of the biggest frustrations for military families is the lengthy and inadequate response to requests for maintenance. NMFA has feared that under privatization developers would renovate and build housing and then depart leaving a new company to manage the housing. **If the Services' oversight of developers mirrors their own care of housing, we could foresee families caught in the vise of the new management company blaming failures on the construction company, the Services blaming both, and families left with the residual mess.***

NMFA is pleased that this Subcommittee is committed to keeping the integrity of the military community intact. It is imperative that the installation commander has authority over both the military aspects of the installation and the needs of its residents. A commander should be

*able to place an incoming family with a special needs member at the top of the housing list; ensure the housing, both inside and out, meets the community standards of an installation; and have the authority to evict families who disrupt the peace of the community. **We also believe the privatization initiative should not be viewed as absolving installation commanders of the responsibility for their servicemembers and families, especially regarding safety issues.***

Sadly, almost 20 years later, the testimonials we have included in this statement show military families are still looking for the answers to these questions. Our Association hopes these hearings will set the Services on a path forward to address not only the deplorable conditions our military families are living in, but the long-term health effects these families will be dealing with long after they leave the service. We encourage members of the committee to read the study on the cognitive function of 6-year old children exposed to mold-contaminated homes in early postnatal period. The paper can be found at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3758954/>.

Air Force

JOINT BASE CHARLESTON, CHARLESTON SC CONTRACTOR: HUNT MILITARY COMMUNITIES

From Anonymous-

I was just reading the article about substandard homes on military installations and would like to remain anonymous if possible but JB Charleston homes are riddled with mold because of poor ventilation in the houses and are told to scrub the mildew before leaving but they don't fix the ventilation problem. On the Air Force side there's 2 types of housing and they put band aids on the one side (Hunley Park) because they don't pay full BAH and then on main base it takes multiple visits for things to be repaired properly. I've lived in both and had my popcorn ceiling collapse on me while taking a shower and was told it could not be fixed or sanded. And while living on main base my drain to my shower upstairs exploded and it took 3 weeks to have it fixed. Homes also flood and items that were damaged are not replaced. I don't think that having the Air Force reestablish tenant/landlord relationships could be good, the current contracting situation works but I think there needs to be an expectation that these contracts are held too so the standards of living are kept up and we don't have to live in mold infested homes. Or be charged for normal wear tear like scuff marks on the walls or wear spots in cheap carpet.

LAUGHLIN AIR FORCE BASE, DEL RIO TX CONTRACTOR: HUNT MILITARY COMMUNITIES

From Megan -

My husband and I moved into our home on Laughlin AFB in September of 2018. By October, I was SO sick. I had 4 trips to the ER, multiple x-rays and ct scans. I was prescribed over 20 medications including steroid injections but nothing would help my symptoms. I would wake up coughing so hard that I would throw up. I would take showers at 2 AM because I couldn't sleep do to my persistent cough. I had frequent nose bleeds. It wasn't until my husband came back from his deployment in November that I could open my vents and see the 20+ years of mold growth glued to my vents. I was eventually hospitalized for 4 days while I received medical treatment. I later learned that my HVAC had never been cleaned, serviced, or even opened. It was still in the original packaging from when it was installed. We had to hire a professional mold inspector to come out and assess the situation because Hunt Housing refused to do so. My husband's job was threatened by the Director of Operations. I was told that if I continued to advocate for families on base, that our lives would be impacted. Our HVAC was finally cleaned back in November. As of today, my illness has returned. Hunt Housing has admitted to us that the mold was not remediated properly and that a company will have to come back and re-clean the unit. My health is being impacted every single day that I am here yet we are working on Hunt Housing preferred schedule.

Mold on air registers prior to November 2018 remediation (Laughlin AFB)



Mold in HVAC unit prior to November 2018 remediation (Laughlin AFB)



Mold in air registers two months AFTER November 2018 remediation (Laughlin AFB)



Mold in HVAC unit two months AFTER November 2018 remediation (Laughlin AFB)



MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, TAMPA FL
CONTRACTOR: HARBOR BAY

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jason, and I am an Army sergeant major stationed at MacDill AFB, FL. My wife and I live with our four children in on-base housing at (address omitted). This letter is submitted in support of a community effort to bring attention to the mold issue affecting service members and their families.

We moved into our on-base residence at the end of January, 2018. I did not immediately notice and visible signs of mold, nor any mold odors in the house as it had just been thoroughly cleaned and still smelled of strongly of cleaning products. However, it was not long before I began to notice the smell of mold in the home. These odors grew stronger in a very short period of time. My family and I all soon began experiencing chronic cold-like symptoms, such as: sore throat, congestion, sneezing, coughing, runny nose, headache, and general malaise. My youngest daughter and I also both suffer from asthma and have experienced an increase in our asthma symptoms since living in our on-base residence and my oldest daughter and I have both experienced skin rashes since moving in, and I have also experienced new and increased muscle and joint pains. My family agrees that we have all experienced more sickness while living in our on-base residence than we have at any other time—we are convinced that mold is the primary contributing factor. Additionally, I believe it's worth noting that my wife homeschools our children, so they spend the majority of the day and night inside our home. It troubles me to think of the health effects the prolonged exposure to mold could be having on my family.

Several months after we moved in, I coincidentally ended up having a conversation with the tenant that occupied our home just prior to us moving in (she is submitting her own documentation concerning the mold). She informed me of all the health issues that her family had experienced while living in the same home. She also informed me of the attempts they had made to get Harbor Bay, the management company responsible for the on-base housing, to address the mold problems. She told me her family eventually moved out of the home when they couldn't get Harbor Bay to properly address the mold.

The former tenant walked through our home with my wife and pointed out some specific mold concerns that her family had brought to the attention of Harbor Bay management. I believe not a single one of these mold issues were remedied prior to Harbor Bay moving my family into the home. Harbor Bay management had full knowledge that there were mold problems with our home, yet they did nothing to remedy these prior to us moving in, nor did they disclose to us that these unresolved mold issues existed. I believe these actions on the part of Harbor Bay management demonstrate negligence and a deliberate disregard for the health and welfare of service members and their families.

The conversation I had with the former tenant solidified for me that my family's concerns about mold were real. So, I conducted my own inspection of some of the areas of the home I believed were now most suspect for mold. I was shocked to find damp and soft spots in our ceilings in a number of places. I was actually able to poke holes in the ceiling in several spots with nothing more than my finger. Of note, earlier on we had reported some visible leaks in some other areas of the ceiling and walls. One of these leaks was severe enough that it formed a hole in the ceiling and would pour

water down onto the floor during rain storms, forcing us to use a bucket to catch the water. With these earlier leaks, it took several days for Harbor Bay to send a repairman to fix them. Given how significant these leaks were, I expressed concern to the

Harbor Bay maintenance personnel that mold may have developed. I never heard anything further regarding this concern.

I continued to inspect our home and found an area behind a door in the hall closet where black mold was visibly present. It appeared to have been painted over in an effort to disguise it, but continuing mold growth now made it noticeable (one mold inspector later stated this was just “dirt”—it was eventually confirmed as mold). At this time, I brought the full issue to the attention of Harbor Bay management.

Harbor Bay’s initial response was slow and appeared as not overly concerned. Eventually, a mold inspector did come and conduct an inspection and identify that mold was present in several areas of the home. Most of this mold was inside of walls and in the spaces above the ceilings. The follow-on remediation response was also somewhat slow in coming.

While we waited for remediation, we actually had to move my oldest daughter out of her bedroom due to the intensity of the mold smell in the room. My three teenage daughters (ages 17, 15, and 13) have now shared an 11x13 room together for almost four months and will have to continue doing so, all because of the mold. We can’t even store personal belongings in my daughter’s old room due to the mold smell permeating everything inside the room. We also had a downstairs bathroom that we eventually had to stop using due to the overpowering mold smell. We had to run the bathroom ventilation fan and keep the door closed 24/7 to keep the mold smell from permeating the rest of the house. The mold smell in the bathroom was so strong it would literally take your breath away.

By late October, Harbor Bay finally conducted a partial remediation over a period of about a week while my family and I were out of town. We returned to find repairs that reflected shoddy workmanship, but did appear to have remediated the areas identified as having mold. However, I could still smell mold in the home. Initially, I thought the smell might just be from the mold being stirred up during the remediation and that it would go away after a few days of airing out the house. Unfortunately, the smell remained and my suspicions that mold might still be present in our home began to rise once again.

My oldest daughter’s room remained unoccupied due to the continued heavy mold smell. The smell was even stronger than it had been before the remediation. We also noticed mold smell reemerging from the hall closet. This was the closet that previously had visible black mold and heavy mold odor. To our surprise, we noticed that the very same mold spot from before had reappeared. Looking closely, we also noticed that this particular mold section had not actually been replaced, but merely spackled and painted over, same as before. We had to move our household items out of the closet, as the mold smell was beginning to permeate everything within the closet. These household items ended up being stored on the floor of our master bedroom, creating an eyesore in our room. All the while this was going on, our symptoms persisted, some even growing worse.

Right about this same time, we received a particularly heavy rainstorm that caused water to leak into the home from a place in our kitchen wall and from another location on the floor near our downstairs bathroom. We immediately contacted Harbor Bay to inform them of the leaks. A repairman came that day and temporarily fixed the leaks but did not address anything concerning

the mold. A couple of weeks passed, and I finally called Harbor Bay's head of maintenance, who came within a few days to discuss the mold and other maintenance issues with the home. I told him specifically about the concerns over mold in my oldest daughter's bedroom and the hall closet. Over the course of a week or so, with my insistence that there was mold inside the walls of my daughter's bedroom and in inside the ceiling of the hall closet, they agreed to bring in another mold professional to do an inspection.

The inspector confirmed my suspicions and determined there was in fact mold inside the walls of my daughter's bedroom and the hall closet ceiling. A remediation crew was brought in and remediation was performed. However, I have doubts as to whether proper remediation was done, as previous efforts had proven to be lacking. My daughter's old room is still remains uninhabited due to the smell of mold that continues to permeate the room, forcing my three teenage daughters to still share the same 11x13 room. My family all still suffer from the same symptoms we've experienced since moving into the home. There is still visible mold in our kitchen cabinets, a problem that was identified by the former tenant, and identified multiple times by us. There is still a general smell of mold throughout the house, and in just the last few days the smell of mold has begun to reemerge in both the hall closet and the downstairs bathroom. For these reasons and more, I believe mold still exists inside our home to a significant degree.

I pay nearly \$2500 a month to rent our on-base home. This is a considerable amount of money for a home plagued with mold and a litany of other maintenance issues not mentioned here. Florida statute allows tenants to withhold rental payments until landlords address maintenance issues with a given property. However, I am denied this recourse as Harbor Bay has the rental payments deducted by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service straight from my paycheck. My family and I are frustrated beyond words. We are eagerly seeking other living accommodations, but this option will likely come at a significant inconvenience and financial expense to our family.

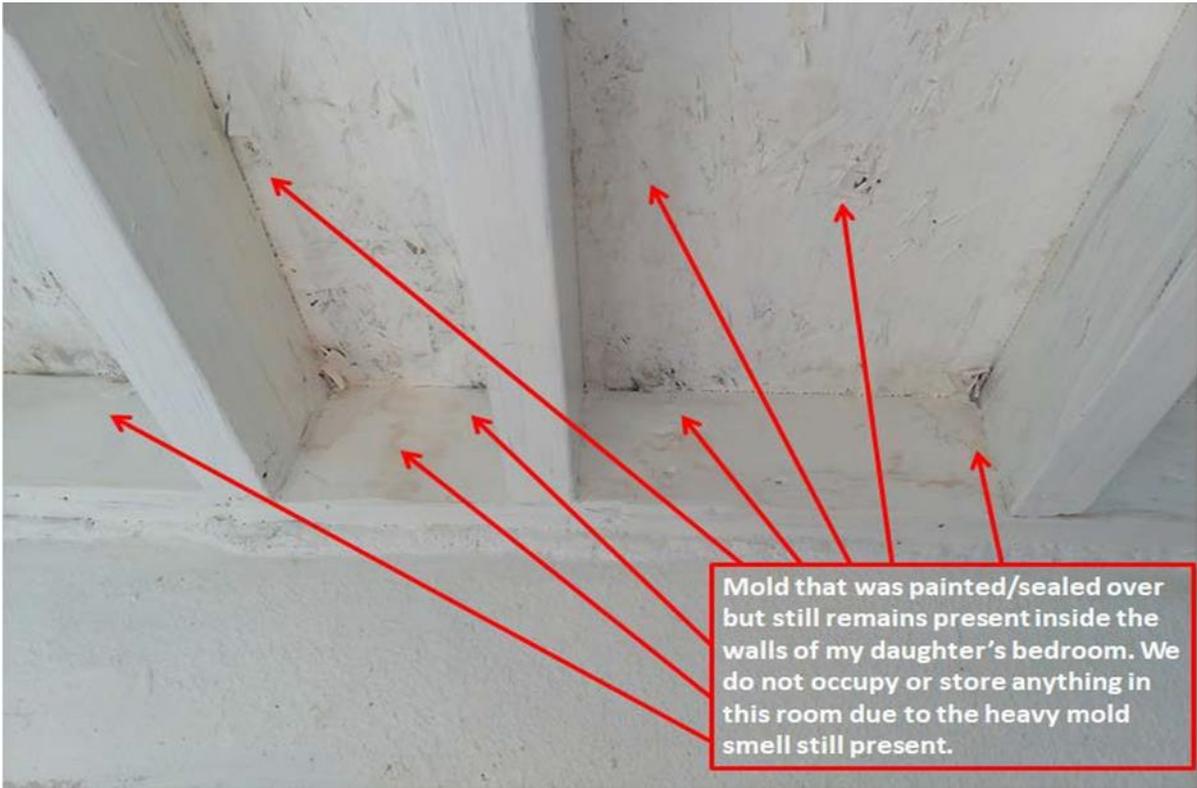
I also wish to mention that the issue of mold and inadequate maintenance is present in other buildings here on MacDill AFB. I work in U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) building #143 and it smells of mold and has visible black mold present in at least one bathroom that I know of. When working in this building, I experience the same symptoms I described earlier. I'm also aware that the USSOCOM physical therapist who worked on the first floor of building #143 was relocated to another building after experiencing symptoms she believed were a result of the mold in the building. I have also personally observed black mold present in the ceiling tiles just outside the office door of the USSOCOM Surgeon, on the first floor of USSOCOM building #153.

There are many details and events that I've omitted in this account for the sake of brevity. I'm happy to elaborate on any of these if necessary, or if given the opportunity to do so. In summary, it appears to me that the Harbor Bay management company lacks the proper processes and procedures to accurately track and address maintenance issues to ensure they are brought to resolution, and it also appears they lack the proper oversight by military officials essential for accountability. This has led to an issue that is now affecting the health and welfare of our military families and an issue that desperately requires the action of our legislators in Washington. I ask for your most urgent and favorable attention in this matter.

Please see enclosed photos for additional details.



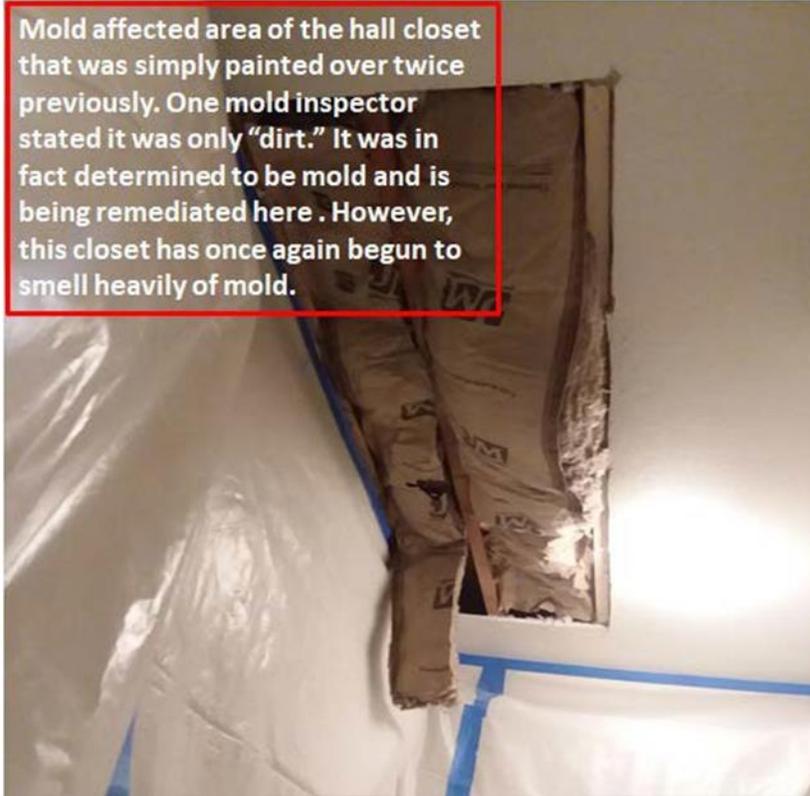
Mold affected area of my daughter's bedroom. Mold is present in the plywood and 2x4 framing where white paint/sealer was applied over the surface. This room of our home remains unusable due to the smell of mold.



Mold that was painted/sealed over but still remains present inside the walls of my daughter's bedroom. We do not occupy or store anything in this room due to the heavy mold smell still present.



Mold affected area of the hall closet that was simply painted over twice previously. One mold inspector stated it was only "dirt." It was in fact determined to be mold and is being remediated here. However, this closet has once again begun to smell heavily of mold.



Living Room Area



Kitchen Area

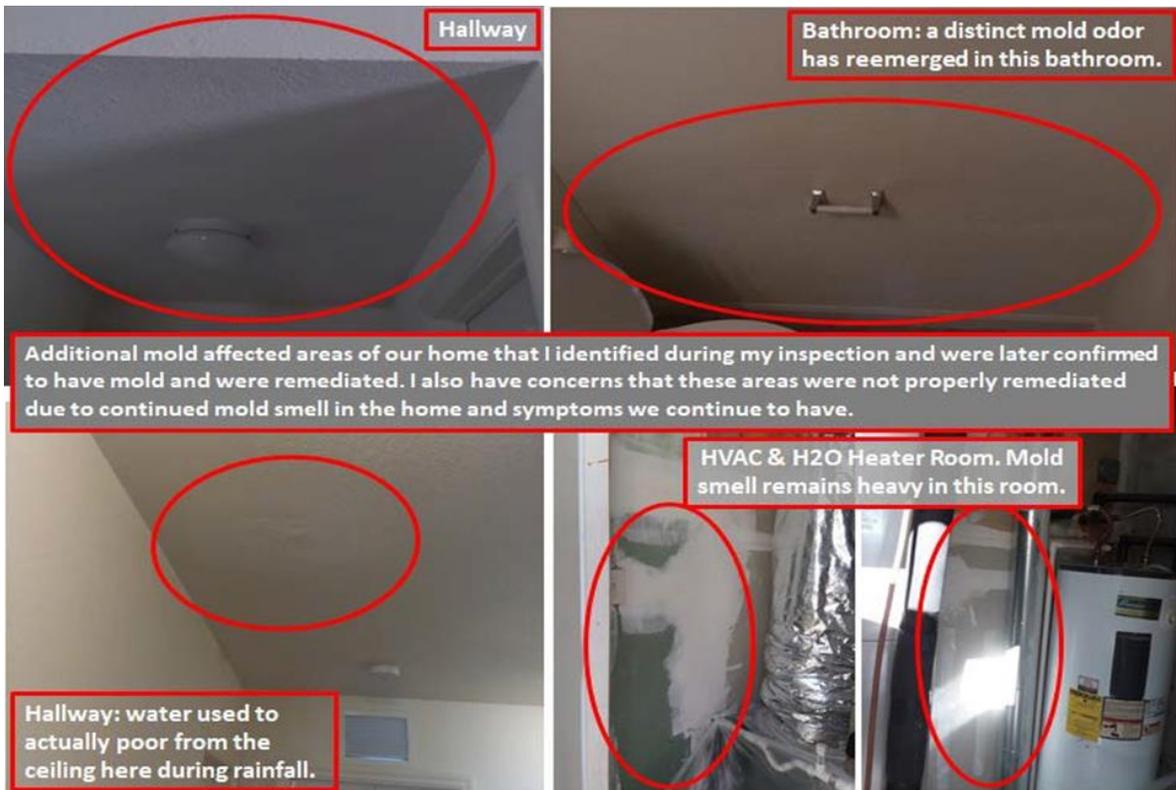
Other mold affected areas of our home that I identified during my inspection that were later confirmed to have mold and were remediated. However, I have concerns that these areas were not properly remediated due to a general mold smell that remains in our home and the symptoms we continue to suffer.



Daughter's Bedroom



Kitchen Area



**MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, MINOT ND
CONTRACTOR: BALFOUR BEATTY**

From Beth -

Base housing at Minot AFB. When it's not freezing in here, the windows are covered in mold (see photo below). Balfour Beatty is notorious for charging to repair things as you move out, and then never replace them between tenants. So are they just pocketing the money? For \$1600 a month in BAH they take from us you'd think we wouldn't have to worry about this."

Mold on the Window (Minot AFB)



Frost and Ice inside the Window (Minot AFB)



“If it helps any, this is our living room window, it was -50 last night [1/29/19] where we are. We couldn’t keep the room warm however we tried.” (Minot AFB)



Army

FORT POLK, LEESVILLE LA CONTRACTOR: CORVIAS

To Whom It May Concern,

My family moved to Fort Polk, LA Dec. 2015 and immediately upon entering our home managed by Corvias I noticed the smell of wet dog lingering on the damp carpets throughout the home. I was assured by Corvias these carpets were cleaned. My son was two and a half at the time and I was pregnant.

Within weeks of living in the home which I was told was "newer" my son and husband developed respiratory issues. I had the suspicion of mold in the home and checked in our air ducts, visible mold spores were present, the worst being the duct above my son's bed. I was told it was "mildew" and they sent a maintenance worker to clean the ducts. My son and husband's condition worsened, my son was on and off steroids put on a nebulizer, in the ER for breathing treatments, had his tonsils and adenoids removed, allergy and blood tested. He tested positive to being allergic to Aspergillus which you can see in the photo below was abundant in my home. Mold would grow within a day on my infant's crib sheets, she too had an ER visit for difficulty breathing was put on steroids and on a nebulizer by the time we left.

Corvias refused to admit it was toxic mold even though the test they administered had high volumes shown.

They did not properly remediate and blamed us for the issues.

My husband is in the Special Operations community and he too was on an inhaler as needed as well as heavy duty prescription cough suppressants while living in that home.

My son, now at 5, has asthma and is on a plethora of meds. He even had pneumonia recently. He struggles to make it through a karate class and must have an inhaler on him at all times. He has an opportunity to be a 3rd generation Green Beret if he chooses, but if asthma stays with him that opportunity will be robbed from him due to incompetence and complete disregard for our military's safety from Corvias. Military readiness and morale is being directly affected by these 50 year contracts with no accountability and oversight.

I am extremely angered and appalled that our government is letting private companies take in extremely large profits at the expense of sick children and soldiers. This needs to be fixed, these companies need to be held accountable and I will not stop speaking out until action is taken.

Please see photos from my home below.

I appreciate you taking the time to read my story.

Military families deserve to be physically heard from. Please advocate for our voices to be heard, I

would love to share my family's story to the members of SASC.

Mold in air ducts (Fort Polk)



Mold in air ducts (Fort Polk)



Mold on air registers (Fort Polk)



Mold under carpet pad (Fort Polk)



**FORT STEWART, FORT STEWART GA
CONTRACTOR: BALFOUR BEATTY**

From Selina -

Our issues are more minor but clearly In line with the bigger issues other families are having. We're in the "newer" "nicer" housing on Ft Stewart. And it certainly looks like it is but the building and work is so sloppy. Every wall - and even our front door is painted with latex paint. Slight imperfections in the work cause the paint to bubble and start peeling. Once it begins it's impossible to stop. The front door (that receives direct sunlight) is painted with black latex paint which bubbles and becomes sticky. They even painted the inside of my dishwasher to hide rust! The paint comes off each wash and I can only imagine all of the paint spots that are too small to see. Our upstairs floors creak heavily and the hallway actually dips down in one area. They have assured us

the flooring was checked for water damage and there is nothing wrong but I don't trust them. We moved in just over 3 months ago.

FORT LEAVENWORTH, FORT LEAVENWORTH KS
CONTRACTOR: FRONTIER HERITAGE COMMUNITIES

From Danica -

These are my windows in my house- in two of my children's rooms. All our windows look like this. When maintenance came out they acknowledged it was mold. They also tried to say I had my house too warm and that contributed to the mold growing. Also, in the same visit they acknowledged that the leaking windows also contribute to the mold, but they didn't have the means to go and replace all the windows in all the homes. We moved in this house when my son was 12 months old. Up until that point he was hitting all his milestones. Now, he will be 2 in June- he's developmentally delayed, non-verbal requiring speech therapy, occupational therapy, and diagnosed with Failure to thrive because he won't eat food and is borderline negative on the growth charts. I strongly believe the mold could be contributing to his delays.

Mold on the Windows (Fort Leavenworth)



Mold on the Windows (Fort Leavenworth)



Mold on the Windows (Fort Leavenworth)



FORT MEADE, FORT MEADE MD CONTRACTOR: PICERNE, NOW CORVIAS

From Anna -
Dating back to early 2000s

We lived in housing on Ft. Meade in various houses in the early 2000's. The first one, the window came out of the wall the first time we tried to open it, and my stove top was not actually attached to the stove. (Gas stove, so if you bumped it, the top would slide, taking your pans with it, but the flame from the underside stayed lit. If I ran my garbage disposal while my dishwasher was on, then sludge from the disposal would spray on the dishes. Picerne's response - in the almost a year we lived in that house, the window was never fixed - you didn't open it, and if you did, just pull the whole thing out and lean it against the wall. The stove had some large bolts put in - not fixed properly, but at least it held in place. The garbage disposal - the response was, "Well, why are you using them both at the same time? Just put some bleach in the bottom every now and then, it will be fine." The house they moved us to after that, we had a wiring issue where the wires were so old they (aluminum wiring) were literally melting. The guy who came to fix it told me at least it melted enough to break the circuit. Otherwise you wouldn't have known and it could have eventually caused a fire.

We finally got moved into a brand new house. One Picerne built - not one they inherited with problems. Ok. This should be good. We were the FIRST people to live in it, one of the first families in the neighborhood. The first time our daughter took a bath, the water flowed into the kitchen from the ceiling. Apparently, they didn't attach the overflow (which was in the middle of the tub, not near the top) wasn't attached to a pipe of any sort. Any water going through it just went into the ceiling. The tub in our bathroom was the same way. Apparently, ALL of them were like this - they called it "a design flaw". The walls would have cracks as the foundation settled, floors creaked... Not issues a brand new, couple of month old house should have.

These are just SOME of the problems we had. Some of our friends had it MUCH worse - black mold, rotting walls, etc. The base response - not our problem, it's privatized."

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT, WEST POINT NY CONTRACTOR: WEST POINT FAMILY HOMES (WPFH) A SUBSIDIARY OF BALFOUR BEATTY COMMUNITIES

Imagine every time your central air would turn on mold AND gas would circulate through your house. That was our nightmare. We spent 10-weeks in a hotel. My 3-year old son on a cot in the corner of the room and my 6-year old daughter on a pull out couch. For 10 weeks. 12+ doctors and specialists. Countless doctors appointments. Countless lies from Balfour Beatty. Being told we were crazy, being made to feel like we were the only ones "complaining." Feeling a sense of hopelessness and learning we could trust no one. Sadly, our story is all too familiar to so, so many other military families and this needs to stop now. We have poured our heart and soul into the military. My husband excels in every aspect of his career. His job and his soldiers have always been the top of his priority which is fueled by his love and devotion to his country. His track record speaks for itself. For me, I was always an advocate for our families. While we were at Ft. Benning I spent countless

hours volunteering for the AFTB and MCCC spouses programs. I was awarded volunteer of the quarter in 2011. I was one of the first spouses to take the Master Resiliency Course at Ft. Benning. I was a FRG leader 3 times. I always answered the call when help was needed. To say we feel betrayed after this debacle would be an understatement. This whole experience has made us lose faith in the Army and the military. It seems something as simple as providing a safe, non-hazardous roof over military families heads is too much to ask for. We deserve better than this. During our ordeal, there were two statements that were said to us multiple times and that have stuck with us. The first being, "we want to do what is best for you, but we also need to do what is best for the Army." I *really* want to know what that means. If military families are suffering, if service members are being poisoned, how in anyones sane mind is that doing what is best for the Army? My rockstar of a husband was pulled away for months from his duties and obligations because of this ordeal. The second statement was, " Balfour Beatty is a privately-owned company...it isn't part of the military...so it is out of our hands...there is only so much we can do." We realize its because of their contracts. But please tell us how this is even possible. It is absolutely mind-blowing that the contracts left little to no power for military members to fight for themselves when such obvious wrong-doing was being taken placed. If no one has the "authority" to help us or fight for us, where does that leave us?

This testimony is also meant to be anonymous because of the fear of reprisal. West Point is an extremely small post. There are so many people suffering in silence here out of fear. Out of fear that their husbands career could be jeopardized or out of fear of social ousting. Many people who have tried to come forward about their living hazards have been told to "Shut up and sit down." Also, housing conducted their own "testing" after we had our out-of-pocket private testing done and their results were quite different than ours. With that, we know they could very easily turn the finger around on us with their falsified findings and test results. From what we have learned, this is how most PPVs operate. More on this later. All we can say is we KNOW our truth. We have nothing to gain from this situation. We can only pray that something is done so another military family doesn't suffer at their corrupt hands.

We signed into West Point family housing December 26th, 2017. Upon our walk through of our new home we found many concerning issues. One of the biggest issues was the state of our master bathroom and the master tub. (It is the picture with the massive staining with red dots and black around the caulking. We also found mouse droppings. We also noticed that we had a heating issue. Upstairs the heat was well into the 90s while downstairs was in the 50s. The house was dirty, closet doors were on the floor, and it was obvious they were not prepared for us to sign-in. Given the fact that it was literally the day after Christmas, we gave them all the benefit of the doubt and did not make a fuss about it. Also, this was our first time living in military housing so we honestly did not know what to expect. Our leasing agent and maintenance told us they would reglaze the tub, it was just some 'mildew' and reglazing would take care of that. The mouse droppings were old, and the heating issue was a 'normal issue on West Point.'" Long story short, we did in fact have a *very* active mouse issue. The heating issue was not normal (which they finally acknowledged) and eventually fixed after numerous calls. And as for our bathtub, it took a couple calls for them to finally send someone out to fix it. During our first few months in our home we also smelled something funny. It ended up being a gas leak. Looking back this gas leak was a blessing in disguise. That is when we finally looked into our **locked** maintenance closet. While the tech was showing us where the gas leak was coming from I noticed that the entire room was black. Completely black. I asked about it and he said oh its just old mildew and nothing to be concerned about. I took him at his word, again, first time living on post, so why would I think anyone would be lying to me but it still didn't sit well with me. I put a follow up call in to have someone come look at it. They sent Bill Hines, "maintenance supervisor". He told me, again, that it was old mildew and it was "impossible to get into the vents/HVAC and there was NO issue."

In the Spring my husband started having breathing issues. He said he felt like something was sitting on his chest and he just didn't feel well. I had noticed that I was waking up every morning with a headache and a sore throat. With two small kids who are very active, who has time to go to the doctor over something so trivial. My husband ended up going to the doctor because his breathing was getting worse, his PCM said he was fine and prescribed him an inhaler. Physically, he was in shape, exceeded in his PT tests, had no other concerning issues, so it was just odd. I was starting to get a little concerned because my husband rarely went to the doctor. My 7-day a week gym-rat of a husband was quickly fading. His workouts started getting less frequent because he just wasn't feeling up to it.

In the summer I started having more severe symptoms. Our summer brought lots of travels and I was completely fine but I did start noticing whenever I was in the house I did not feel well. When our travels ended and the amount of continuous time I spent in the house increased the more severe I would get. My symptoms included dizziness, shortness of breath, nausea, numbness in arms and face, severe headaches, brain fog, severe fatigue, fullness in my ear, eye issues and rashes. I made an appointment with my PCM the end of August and she was concerned about my heart. Little did I know this was the beginning of my medical journey to figure out what was happening to me. Also, during that time I realized I was no longer a safe driver. It was completely debilitating. We had also noticed active mold patches in our master bathroom.

Fast forward to today, an overview of my medical issues. I now have a cardiologist, electrophysiologist, pulmonologist, ENT (and a second opinion), allergist, endocrinologist, neurologist, and I have seen a PT. I am a young 30 year-old with no previous medical history. So far I have received the diagnoses of asthma AND reactive airway disease. I have been prescribed a daily medication, a daily long-term inhaler, a steroid inhaler and a rescue inhaler. I am still undergoing a bunch of testing with my electrophysiologist and endocrinologist and have been given the unofficial diagnosis of 'situational POTS' but my electrophysiologist is at a loss of why I am having these symptoms all of a sudden. All of my blood work has come back normal thus far. And thankfully, my brain MRI was normal. As for my family. My children, neurologically seem ok. But can a 3 and 6 year-old properly express if they felt 'dizzy'? Probably not. My daughter, since moving here has developed awful eczema, she had mild eczema as a baby but in the house it has flared up like never before. She also had an ongoing cough which started to sound asthmatic and she was prescribed an inhaler. My husband seemed to be getting worse as well. He started having migraines. But, he left the house for work every day. The kids left the house for school. I was in the house all day, every day and it got to the point where some days I was not well enough to move from my bed or my couch and escape from the house.

It wasn't until a neighbor posted on Facebook about finding black mold in her house that things changed. She said they had to fight Balfour Beatty to acknowledge there was a problem and forced them to look into it after they lied to her numerous times and wouldn't fix it. That is when everything made sense. EVERYTHING. We then realized everything we had been told was a lie. We realized the house was literally poisoning us and all our medical issues finally made sense. We called maintenance immediately to set up an appointment for them to come look at our mold situation again. Of course they sent Bill Hines. After a couple visits from Bill Hines he kept telling us that he didn't see anything of concern and the "stuff" in our bathroom was just some mildew and water staining because we took "messy showers" and it was our fault. As for the maintenance closet he told us again, there was nothing of concern and it was "inactive mildew." I also asked him about a smell we had been smelling that was coming and going, he said he didn't smell anything and dismissed it. To "ease our minds," he promised to send a contractor to make sure we didn't have a roof leak or something because he agreed that our master suite felt "different." He only agreed to

that after he couldn't hide the fact his "moisture reader" was going off the charts. I should also add, we later learned that Balfour Beatty would always send Bill Hines whenever there was a call about mold, lead, or anything of the nature. He was the point person to put out the fire and diminish the issue. We also learned, that he used the same exact narrative across the boards, literally word for word to every tenant who called in these issues. Over a week went by and it took a few calls to follow up with Bill to ask him when this "contractor" was going to come look at our roof. When the contractor finally came to our house, he said that he didn't see anything of concern. However, while they were "looking" in our attic there was a lot of whispering. And then loudly would say, "Yup, everything looks great up here! No issues anywhere." Bill said since there was no issues he would send someone to recaulk the bathtub, bleach, and repaint so we wouldn't have to look at the "staining." I asked him point-blank, how do you know this is not mold. How do you know this isn't in the drywall. How can you tell the mold all over the HVAC system wasn't getting in our air? He told me that he was a "visual guy" and from what he "saw" there were no issues and they do not and would not do any testing of the sort to figure it out. Thankfully, we had started doing our own due diligence and had spoken to numerous people and we knew that that's what he was going to say. We cancelled the bleaching and repainting appointment and hired a third party for appropriate testing after we were told they do not do testing.

During this time we had also learned that while our unit was vacant the hot water tank exploded and there was running/sitting water for god knows how long. It obviously was never properly taken care of or cleaned up, hence the extreme mold growth. The hot water heater was never properly installed due to untrained, careless techs hence the multiple gas leaks.

October 12th. October 12th was when everything changed. That Friday morning our hired environmental hygienist arrived. Within 15 minutes of being in our home he looked at me and said, "You have a big problem." He also told me that the mold growth in our home was so severe that obviously our bodies were having a "normal reaction." He also told me that the way our maintenance closet and HVAC system was set up was so dangerous with such poor circulation, it was a perfect breeding ground for mold. He also told me that he was surprised that these issues were still going on at West Point. Apparently, we were far from the first who had hired him out of desperation to figure out the truth. We paid him \$740 to have him come and tell us what we already knew and feared. We had to pay \$740 out of pocket to prove that we were not crazy and to prove that Balfour Beatty were lying to us.

At 11:40AM of October 12th I received a call from the Garrison Commander of West Point. He said that he had received a call from IMCOM regarding our situation and he would like to meet with us later that afternoon. Thankfully, a previous resident of West Point housing spoke up at a AUSA town hall regarding the issues with privatized housing, which sparked a lot of movement. With that sparked a lot of grassroots movements at West Point and people started speaking up about their experiences. I spoke to this previous resident about our experience thus far. I told her all our suspensions, all our health issues, and how we were just starting our own due diligence. Later that afternoon, about an hour before the garrison team was supposed to arrive, my husband received a call from the housing manager, Nick Imel, asking to meet and see our house because he had "no idea" there were any issues. Lies. He arrived immediately with David Barnio (spelling?), head of maintenance, took a look around, took some pictures, didn't say too much and quickly left. He did say that he would have a plan of action for us by the end of the weekend of what they were going to do. After they left, part of the Garrison team arrived. RCI representatives were the first to arrive. A lady named Kay immediately went on the defense and started lecturing my husband and was incredibly condescending...rude would be an understatement. My husband quickly shut her down. The GC and CSM arrived and we sat around our kitchen table and explained our entire situation. While they were there they commented on the gas smell, and we told them that we were told multiple times by

maintenance that we did NOT have a gas leak, despite the smell. CSM called maintenance herself and tells them we have a gas leak and they need to fix it ASAP. Maintenance arrived after they left and they yet again told us we did not have a gas leak. I should add, we also found out Bill Hines took an unexpected "vacation" during this time. We have it on good sources that he was told take some "time" until all of this blew over.

Sunday night rolled around and we had heard nothing from Nick. My husband called him at least 5 times. No plan of action. Monday, we finally heard from him and he said he agreed that he would move us into a hotel until they figured out what was going to happen. That is where our fight really began. Little did we know, that day marked the start of living in a hotel for 10 weeks and the insanity that was about to ensue.

I have highlighted some of the key points that took place from when this all kicked off to when we finally started to see some for of resolution. There are plenty of other events that took place but would be too much to process and would probably make it harder to follow. I would also need literally a book to go over every detail.

15 October - Move to Five Star on Post, the hotel was so disgusting. There was blood on the toilet, chipping lead paint on the windowsills, holes in the wall, mold in the window-unit air conditioner. It was a huge slap in the face.

16 October - That morning I went back to our house because I had a suspicion people were going to be poking around/entering our house despite our DO NOT ENTER on our lease and I wanted to be present. And I was right. Along with reps from BB showing up unannounced, garrison and safety showed up as well. CSM smelled the gas again and was floored that no one had acknowledged that, so she called the fire department herself. Long story short, we did indeed have a gas leak coming from our hot water heater but it wasn't big enough to "cause an explosion." Safety ran a series of tests and found that in our master bath the humidity level was at 69%. It was a freezing day and no one had used that shower/bathroom in well over a week. They stated that the EPA standard for humidity level is below 50%, but ideally between 30-40%. Our entire house was above the 50% range and they were floored. They also found a slew of other safety violations which included things like the house had no moisture barrier in the crawl space/foundation, there was no drainage in our backyard (in our backyard was a huge mountain so runoff and flooding was always an issue), and we had trees growing out of our gutters.

This is also the day we first came into contact with Theresa Steele, regional manager for Balfour Beatty. Theresa just "happened" to be walking around our neighborhood with Nick Inmel. They approached our house and asked for permission to enter because she wanted to access the situation. I said yes, and I also asked her what she would've done if I was not home because they do not have permission to enter. She replied, "well technically you have a gas leak so this is deemed an emergency." I was glad they finally recognized we actually did have a gas leak, but incredibly frustrated she used that as an excuse to do whatever she pleased. She proceeded to berate me, belittle me, and question my education level. She tried to make me feel like I was crazy and stupid, and that the person we had hired did inadequate testing and why we didn't just use one of Balfour Beatty's "authorized" contractors. I quickly realized the game she was playing and immediately sent my husband an SOS text message to get home immediately. I think Theresa quickly realized we were not the people who could be bullied and pushed around. She tried, she said multiple nasty comments, but with my husband and I both there as a team she quickly changed her tune and became more friendly. She then started making comments on "how lovely our home was" and "what impeccable cleanliness" we had. Yes, yes I kept a tidy house despite the toxins being circulated in my air.

Later that afternoon, after the commotion with the gas leak, CSM showed us two potential houses we could move into. We chose one and thought we would be able to move in within the week after they turned it. I should also add that previous to CSM taking the reigns of finding us a new, safe house to move into, Nick Inmel told us that there were no 3-bedrooms available and we did not qualify for a 4-bedroom. Kind of funny how with one call from CSM, all of a sudden a bunch of 3-bedrooms mysteriously appeared. Also, one of the houses they offered us was a 4-bedroom ADA house, neither which we "qualified" for. Later that night they moved us to a hotel in Fishkill, NY and out of the Five Star. That night I had gas literally seeping out of my fingernails. The smell was so potent.

17 October - I enter the house for one hour to collect belongings. I had an immediate reaction to the home and had to be rushed to the ER. I was vomiting, had cold sweats, couldn't breathe and was blacking out.

19 October- We received a text from the Garrison team stating, " quick update on your new home: the landscapers will finish up today and they are putting new carpet in your entire home tomorrow. The cleaning crew is there today and will also return again on Monday. I'll walk the house on Monday with BBC before I have you and you husband walk through."

21 October - Receive air sample results from our third party contractor confirming there is an issue. We also receive notice that we will not be having a walk-through of our new home as planned, and it was going to be pushed to that Wednesday.

24 October- Receive final report from our third party contractor. Garrison and Balfour Beatty decide they are going to conduct their own testing. They also said that they are going to have our new home tested as well. They also gave us less than 24-hour notice that our hotel reservation was over at our current hotel and we had to move out and into a new hotel the next morning.

25 October - Moved to Homewood Suites in New Windsor, Balfour Beatty failed to make a new reservation so we showed up and was turned away. Had to wait until BB actually called in the reservation. Keep in mind we had no where to go, my husband had to get back to West Point to teach, and I was unable to drive. It was a mess.

30 October - Garrison's and BB's third party, Adaptive, came to test our house. At the inspection we found out that BB had been entering our house without our consent or knowledge. They left all of the windows in the back of our house open. The thermostat was changed along with a few other obvious signs they were in our home. Neighbors also told us there had been people in our house. The head of the Army Program for Balfour Beatty tried to tell my husband that his people were in there to "make sure the conditions were right for the test." Not sure how opening all of the windows before an air quality test achieves that. We also do not know what other remediation had taken place since we moved out to ensure they got the results they wanted.

1 Nov - Told that we would have initial results in 3-5 days. Never happens.

7 Nov - After fighting with my PCM to give me a Pulmonology referral for weeks (the issue with healthcare at military hospitals is a whole different beast of an issue, especially at KACH), I finally had an appointment. At this appointment we learn I was breathing at 57%.

7 Nov - We received a message saying the new house they were going to offer us failed inspection/test so they were going to have a few more homes tested to ensure they were safe. So

with that, obviously our hotel stay was extended. Also with that, we knew we were going to have to spend at least another 2 weeks at minimum in a hotel because of the amount of time it takes to get results back. We were hoping to be in a home for Thanksgiving but we quickly realized it was unrealistic at this point. *We later learned that they never actually tested other homes. They went as far as giving us actual dates these tests were supposed to be taking place, when they never actually did. *

9 Nov - My husband scheduled a sit-down with Garrison and he was assured we would be taken care of and to trust them. He expressed the lack of communication and transparency on their part and how we constantly felt left in the dark until the next round of bad news was dropped on us. After this meeting we gained another sense of hope that there was going to be some sort of resolution soon.

13 Nov - BB and Garrison conducted a second round of testing. That morning we received a call from Kay from RCI saying that they were going to start testing at 10AM, instead of the agreed upon noon. We had agreed that testing was going to start at noon so that my husband could be present and he taught until noon. Kay gave me all these lies about why they were changing the time and no one from Garrison would be present, just BB. After I expressed my concerns about BB being alone in my home for botched testing she stated she would be our "representative." At this point, we knew enough to know that we absolutely could not trust her either. I sent CSM a message to express our concerns so she made sure someone from her team was present. Later that evening my husband met with Honorable Gillis, along with a small-bus of people, at our home to show and tell them our situation.

14 Nov - Garrison told us they expected to have "initial results" about a home on Meigs Road. This is a lie as testing was never done.

24 November - Garrison told us the results from our house came in on the 21st of November. However, on 26 November a report was generated by a different company called Exponent from California that we had never been briefed on, and they were not the company that did the actual testing. ***After looking into it deeper we found out that Exponent is considered "the hired gun" of the scientific community. They are known to only publish results that are favorable to their client. They were the company that argued second hand smoke doesn't cause cancer back in the day. Additionally all of the "data" that the Army's experts reviewed was prepared by these other companies, they did not do any of their own testing.*** My husband confronts Garrison with this knowledge and they were extremely taken aback. They were not tracking that this was happening. On Exponent's webpage they advertise they help clients win cases against black mold. There has also been many investigations and articles written about the integrity of Exponent and their business ethics.

Last week of November- (date is forgotten)- We receive a call from CSM saying she had good news, they had a home ready for our approval and the walk through would be on December 3rd. We were so thrilled but quickly became confused when we found out the home they wanted us to walk through was the home they originally offered us in October. This was the home they had tested and it failed inspection and they deemed it not safe to move into because of active mold, moisture issues, and ventilation issues.

03 December - My husband arrived for the walk through. Only CSM and a BB leasing agent were present. They did the typical walk-through and my husband said ok this "looks" fine, now show me what you have done to remediate all the issues YOU told me were present. Blank stares. The house had not been remediated and BB tried to make us sign for it. We believe they tried to pull a fast one

over us or thought we would sign for anything out of desperation to get out of the hotel and have everything resolved. My husband walked out and said "thank you for wasting my time." My husband reached out to the GC expressing his frustration. The GC for whatever reason was not tracking the severity of our situation. He apologized for how we had been treated and the miscommunication of the previous walkthrough. We later found out that BB had told Garrison that the house was ready for us, and Garrison took them at their word instead of actually confirming anything had been done. Why anyone takes them at their word is beyond us with their given track record.

04 December - My husband received an email from the GC saying the goal was to have us in a home by Christmas. He just finished a meeting going over a timeline regarding our situation and he was just waiting on some information from BB.

12 December- Second walk-through of the new house. The Garrison command team, preventive med, safety, RCI and reps from Balfour Beatty were present. They briefed us on what had been done to remediate the home. They showed my husband the areas in question and how they fixed the issues. We ended the walk through with the GC telling us they would let us know the next steps in this process and their plans to remediate all of our belongings. I should add- during our testing we had found that there was a small presence of particles on all of our stuff. So all of our household goods had to be cleaned. Garrison and BB were going back and forth with each other because BB obviously did not want to have to pay for someone to clean our household goods because according to their "Exponent report" everything was fine, there was no issues, and no remediation was needed." Everyone else however knew that was far from the case.

20 December - Signed for our new house, the same house that took almost two months to "fix," but really could have been ready for us much earlier if there was any effort put into it by Balfour Beatty. It is literally mind boggling knowing we could've been in a house and not living in a hotel if they just fixed the issues instead of just tried to cover everything up.

I know this statement, or I should say novel, is getting long. I know I am forgetting so many other important details. To sum up all of the events that had taken place and the "findings" leadership has landed on here, it seems clear that all invested parties want to find any reason other than the housing to explain why people are getting sick. The process to have any real action take place is incredibly long and takes a great deal of force to make anything move. Balfour Beatty will spare no expense to bend results in their favor and our leadership and inspectors are making recommendations and decisions based on the information they are given by the ones who have the most to lose.

We realize how lucky we are with how our situation was handled and turned out compared to others, which is absolutely sickening to say. We know for a fact that the only reason our situation was handled more delicately than others was because of the force we had behind us. We know so many other families who were in the same exact situation as us, during the same timeframe yet they are STILL fighting to get out of or at least remediate their toxic homes. The only difference is they didn't have the same people in their corner and housing is more freely able to push them around and do whatever they want. We have also learned that West Point/Garrison/Balfour Beatty (whoever it is) now has a contract with Adaptive. So now, whenever a resident calls and says they want their home tested for mold or any other concerns, Adaptive is sent out, and they too will get an Exponent report generated. And they too will be told, "hey look, there is no issues with your home." And those poor people will take them at their word. It is literally so sickening to think about.

From our experience it has open our eyes to how awful this situation is military wide. When you are one family fighting a billion dollar company you feel so small. But when you learn its NOT just you, there are also thousands of other families fighting the same exact fight it is not only crazy to learn, it is empowering. A few months ago, a friend here at West Point told about the "military mold page," that I should join. I had no idea what she was talking about. When I found this "mold page" that she was talking about I couldn't stop the tears from flowing. How was it possible that there were thousands who had gone through the same exact thing I was going through. How was it that all our stories were so similar yet none of us had ever met each other, we were from all the different branches, across the world, with different private companies. How is it possible that every single PPV had the same exact narrative? How was the same exact things that were told to us were told to someone in California with a different PPV? It is so obvious that all the PPVs have the same exact narrative. And you know why? Because they know they can get away with it. The contracts allow them to get away with it.

The one thing that kept us going in our fight with housing was the hope that we were going to help so many people. We wanted to believe that if we stayed in the fight, and not backed down like so many other people, changes were actually going to be made. We wanted to show them that you can not push around military families and what they are doing and have been doing is wrong. They are knowingly poisoning military families and there has to be some sort of repercussion to that. I am sad to report that, at least at West Point, nothing has changed. If anything, a coverup has seemed to ensued. There has been town halls where Garrison has flat out said there are no issues at West Point with housing. I am sure that behind the scenes they are working with Balfour Beatty making sure they start doing the right things, but I know for a fact not a single thing has changed. Our story has gone through the community's grapevine and we have had numerous families secretly approach us on advice on what to do because they were given the same exact runaround. It is so discouraging.

And if you are wondering what happened to Bill Hines. The guy who told us, along with others, that there was absolutely nothing with our house and we were crazy, the guy who lied straight to our faces, the guy who looked at my 3-year old son and tried to make nice with him knowing very well what he was doing to us. Yeah- that Bill Hines- he is still very active in his role to this day. He is still sent to people's houses whenever they get a call about mold or lead. He continues to lie to people telling them not to worry and everything is perfect. My husband made a good point, obviously, if corporate wasn't dictating the narrative and how they handle certain situations, Bill Hines would've been fired on the spot. But no, he wasn't. Clearly he is just following orders from his boss, and perhaps his bosses boss. So you can't fire someone who is following orders perfectly.

I will conclude with saying- we have remained silent in our fight. We have not gone public. We have not posted on facebook, we have not contacted news outlets, and we have not created a public outcry. We have not gone public out of respect for the prestigious name of the Academy that we live at. For the respect of Garrison. We really trusted them and gave them the benefit of the doubt that they were going to enforce change. But now. Looking at how everything unfolded and how we were treated. I question if that was the right decision. I know when the time is right, we will tell our story. But for now, we will remain silent but will continue to help families who come to us out of absolute fear and desperation. When they are in such a dark, helpless place and they feel like their screams are not being heard and they know they are being lied to over and over again. We will help them because we know the pain all too well. I am hoping this statement, and this hearing helps them. And helps me. I pray to God this is the start of a real revolution of change. All these PPVs need to be held accountable for their actions.

I will include some of my pictures in another email. These were just some of the things we were able to visibly see. If we could see all that, what couldn't we see behind all the walls and in the air ducts. It scares me to wonder.

Marine Corps

**MARINE CORPS AIR STATION BEAUFORT, BEAUFORT SC
CONTRACTOR: ATLANTIC MARINE CORPS COMMUNITIES AT TRI-COMMAND (AMCC), A
SUBSIDIARY OF LENDLEASE**

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joseph, I am currently stationed in Beaufort, SC and my family resides in AMCC's Laurel Bay Military Housing. We live in a 1,200 square foot 3 bedroom, 2 bath home that requires the full amount of our BAH check, totaling \$1,623 a month. My wife and I just had our first child in April of 2018 and have been fearful for her health within this home.

My wife and I first moved to Laurel Bay in June 2016, we were on short notice of our relocation and didn't have the financial means to find any other housing options so we trusted the government quarters would take care of us. Our first year in Beaufort, SC we had already encountered a large variety of incidents.

Lawn Care:

Our lawn care became the first concern. Our entire yard was a dirt pit infested with fire ants to the point where you couldn't cross it to get the mail without getting bit. We voiced our concern and were told pest control was notified and that they would be out to treat our yard, so we waited on the day of the appointment and no one showed to treat the yard. After filing another report time went on with no resolution. Ironically living in a dirt pit we still received "lawn care services" the contracted company, "Mainscapes" has continued to grow an impressive damage report with no reimbursements (insurance invoice for \$1,017 that was never paid for) or resolution not only our property but all of our neighbors as well. We have had to file insurance claims on vehicle damage done by the lawn company as well as them running over our installed chain link fence, ripping a garden hose off of its elevated hanging position resulting in the pipe bursting and flooding our back porch (I had to chase down the individual responsible as he ran away from the situation), a broken window, as well as a variety of broken bird feeders, garden items and grass damage (on our second home in Laurel Bay). All these incidences went without reimbursement or resolution with the exception of the broken home window.

Broken fence from landscaping company (MCAS Beaufort)



1st Home, 305 Dahlia (June 2016- October 2017)

In the time spent at our first home, aside from lawn issues we filed multiple mold complaints that every time resulted in the same simple answer, “that’s not mold” or “that’s just a common occurrence in South Carolina.” The inspector would clean the area with bleach and it would continuously return. To make the situation a little more clear, the mold concern was from discoloration in walls (looking like water damage), growing fuzzy black spots around windows and vents as well as a green moss growing on furniture.

Mold around windows (MCAS Beaufort)



Mold growing on furniture (MCAS Beaufort)



In July of 2018 my wife and I found out we would be expecting our first child. With the Laurel Bay cancer allegations being broadcasted nationally our uncertainties pushed us to really want to leave that unhealthy environment. Unfortunately, Hurricane Florence came through the area delaying our chance to move. With the mold concerns and neighboring issues, that consisted of a large amount of police reports filed as well as the local chain of command being notified. The neighbor was never punished and continued with outright disgraceful behavior that we did not want our child exposed to. Despite any efforts of evicting these neighbors for breaking multiple lease agreement policies, we were forced to relocate to another home within Laurel Bay while my wife was 4 months pregnant. This internal move cost us \$800 out of pocket to move 6 blocks away from a neighbor that had threatened us and caused us a great deal of stress during my wife's pregnancy.

2nd Home, 187 Ash (October 2017- Current)

With the continuation of lawn issues, and even more mold complaints filed, we have been encountering every kind of home issue imaginable. We have brown ceilings, but “no water damage,” paint falling off the walls and ceiling, cracks in the walls and ceiling, no GFCI outlets in the kitchen, crooked outlets and light switches, no main door seals, and all for the price of \$1,623 a month. We have had a broken refrigerator, stove, garbage disposal, HVAC unit, dishwasher, and plumbing issues. One instance was our broken HVAC that needed the AC to be recharged. The individual showed up at 10:45 PM when the trouble call was made at 10:30 AM that day. He entered the home covered in mud dragging a hose all over our house damaging our rugs and carpet then left at 12:00 AM leaving me to clean all the mud, water and damages with a now woken 3-month-old child. Recently, with the New Year pay charts changing I wanted to engage the housing office about BAH changes. In that encounter it was brought to my attention that we had an outstanding balance of \$2,700 that has been on our account for over a year. We had no knowledge, no notice, and no money to pay back this unknown debt. Five months from relocating and we have been hit with a \$2,700 debt, a 10 month old daughter, moving costs, and a tremendous amount of unnecessary personal and financial stress brought on by the housing office.

Brown ceilings, but “no water damage” (MCAS Beaufort)



Chipping paint falling off the walls and ceiling (MCAS Beaufort)



No GFCI outlets in the kitchen (MCAS Beaufort)



Lack of proper door seals (MCAS Beaufort)



Personal Impact

As a member of the United States Navy the balance between work and home life is naturally difficult. I have held challenging assignments that have dislocated me from home for extended periods of time and have put strain on my wife. Laurel Bay housing has infected my marriage and my home life more than all my previous assignments combine. My wife and I have been on the brink of divorce, co-located living planning, and relocation attempts, all because of the huge financial and emotional strain we fight living on this installation. I can't begin to count the number of nights I have tried to console my crying wife over the poor living conditions we were forced to deal with and having no sign of help or any way out. The largest concern I have is for my daughter's health, Laurel Bay cannot be trusted and shouldn't even be in operation. They have shown test results from the cancer allegations as well as mold results from our homes, all results say "negative." But, how can I trust an organization that says testing has been done when I have first-hand witnessed multiple preventative maintenance inspections that have never tested a fire alarm, changed a single air filter, checked our water heater, inspected any air ducts and never taken a sample of our mold or water damage complaints? The disrespectful housing office employees have done nothing to help and have made no efforts to resolve any issues. The level of stress that my wife and I are under has taken so much from us in an already challenging time. I was so relieved to find out this hearing would be happening and that someone wanted to hear our story, I truly thank you for your time and consideration on this topic.

Smoke alarm last tested on April 10, 2017 (MCAS Beaufort)





Navy

**JOINT BASE ANACOSTIA-BOLLING, WASHINGTON D.C.
CONTRACTOR: HUNT MILITARY COMMUNITY**

From Austin -

The following was sent to Bolling family housing on September 6, 2016

Our most recent and most concerning issues with our home is the fact that the Fire/CO2 alarm has been going off intermittently since 28 AUG '16. We called the fire department that night they came assured us our home was safe and advised us to call Maintenance first thing in the morning.

- On 29 AUG '16 we called in a request and a technician came out and replaced our Smoke/CO2 alarms and checked wiring. The alarms continued to alarm while they were here but they said they did everything they could and left. Throughout the week the alarms

continued but we didn't know what else to do.

- On 2 SEP '16 our children were getting in home therapy and the alarms again started to go off. Since the therapists were in our home we called the fire department again. They came cleared the house and said they called maintenance and we should as well. 2 technicians showed up and said their maintenance director Jeff said there was nothing else they could do since the fire department said my house was safe. We then asked what happens if we ignore the alarm and it is really an emergency? Their answer was that Hunt would take liability on that.
- We called the MP's asking for assistance and they routed us to safety.

We have had numerous AC issues including the unit not being able to maintain 72 degrees for our youngest child (Melanie) who has a congenital Heart defect and is post Open heart surgery.

- They replaced the whole HVAC unit and still we have had issues
- Then they installed a window unit in Melanie's therapy room because she spends most of her day in there with a therapist.
- Even with those "fixes" there are still a number of days where it has gone over 72.
- On another occasion the HVAC unit flooded the medical supply closet and we lost \$4719.26 in supplies.
- When the HVAC was replaced they closed the AC vent in the medical supply closet and destroyed another \$11,187.98 in medical supplies that are supposed to be stored at room temperature. No one wants to replace them and both of our renters policies have denied the claims. We are now trying to figure out how to replace all of this out of pocket and expenses keep rising.

Our bathroom has flooded on 3 occasions, the reason for the flooding has never been found.

- The first occurrence they left wet padding and wet carpet with no fans or dehumidifier for 5 days
- The second occurrence the week of 11 July '16 they brought out one fan and pulled padding, after complaining they brought out a second fan.
- They promised to repair the carpet on 15 July, never came, then 16 July never came, then 18 July again never showed.
- The third occurrence 18 July the bathroom flooded all 4 bedrooms and the hallway.

- We called in the request the evening of the 18th they came and brought another fan removed some padding and water and left
- We called back and said you left wet padding soaked and they sent someone out again. He left the floors were still wet as was padding, he said he would return at 9 AM on 19 July.
- On 19 JULY called and said someone was supposed to be here at 0900, they sent two people. More padding was removed, they moved all of the furniture added 2 dehumidifiers. Said they would be back at 4. Around 1130 the dehumidifiers were leaking I called, no one responded for at least 3 hours.
- When they arrived it was only after I called the housing service center and they sent an employee out and that employee "hunted" the director of maintenance down. They removed the broken machine and replaced the toilet still with no answer as to why this continues to happen. They leave
- The carpet company comes to install the carpet pad they were supposed install on the 15th of July. I call again and say please send someone. The installers say but there is still standing water on the floor we can't install. Maintenance director arrives and sends them away. The HSC employee states we should be temporarily housed until this is fixed. They did pay for us a night at the Navy Lodge last night.
- Carpets were finally installed 22 Jul '16

I believe this will help explain a large portion

We moved into Bolling Family Housing on 3/14/16 finally clearing and moving into an apartment on 3/2/18

We have documented the following dates without power (though this is not a complete list)

- Oct 6, 2016 (0900-1300)
- Oct 8, 2016
- Oct 29, 2016 (0900-1300)
- Nov 2, 2016 (0900-1300)
- Aug 21, 2017
- Aug 14-15, 2017 (this was overnight and since our daughter was hooked to a feeding pump and oxygen we had to sleep in the car to power her equipment via the battery)
- Aug 16, 2017
- July 18, 2017
- Nov 29, 2017 (0800-1400)
- Nov 14, 2017
- Nov 10, 2017
- Oct 15 2017
- Sep 15, 2017
- Jan 2, 2018
- Jan 4, 2018

Now our story:

My family was PCSed to the DC Metro region on a compassionate reassignment to better meet our daughter's medical and educational needs. We were thrilled to access the desperately needed ADA home on JBAB after spending several months in a 4 story home on McNair. Our joy soon turned to sorrow, frustration, and eventually anger. Our children were being harmed by the repeated issues with our base housing. We had several floods which put medical equipment in danger and our children in danger of being electrocuted (since we were running an oxygen concentrator and there was at least an inch of water across the house. We frequently lost power and this meant long hours in the car to keep the kids cool, or to power medical equipment (though only one date is shown above we spent 2 nights sleeping in the back of our van on blankets trying to power medical equipment and keep the two youngest cool.) We provided proof (our EFMP packets showing our children need controlled air and yet no true accommodations were offered at the beginning, and then only the housing office/community center. The community center was not ideal as our youngest needs to be kept away from those that are sick or she is likely to contract the condition. In March 2018 we had finally saved up enough to rent a 2 bedroom apartment in DC and move. It's heartbreaking thinking about those who don't have the funds to do the same. I know you have videos but I'm attaching additional photos/documents I believe may help to better understand the issue.

NAVAL AIR STATION, GREAT LAKES IL CONTRACTOR: HUNT MILITARY COMMUNITIES

From Sarah -

Hi, I want to share with you our story in military housing. Thank you for fighting for military families! We lived in military housing at Naval Station Great Lakes from February-September 2018. In that short period of time we experienced many problems. We had two floods in the basement of our home. When the first flood happened, they came in to remove the water and then refused to test for mold when I asked them to. The basement flooded because of a drainage issue in the back of our house. They failed to fix this problem so after a few more months our basement flooded again. When the second flood happened I was pregnant and home alone with my 11 month old. I called maintenance to tell them that the basement was flooding. I was told that it would be a while before they would be able to help me and I would have to take care of it on my own. Our house didn't have a sump pump, the house connected to us had one. The maintenance guy told me to go over into their house to check to see if the pump was running. I refused to do this, since I did not want to enter a stranger's house and demanded that he come over to take care of this flood. While I was waiting for him to show up I was scooping up water from my basement trying to stop it from damaging our belongings. Later in the day they finally showed up to remove the water. Once again, they refused to check for mold in the house. Almost all of the houses in the neighborhood would flood and the maintenance could not keep up with the problem. I had also found out from the previous tenant that our house was broken into right before we moved in. Hunt properties failed to fix the door from the break in and our front door could be easily opened without a key. Memorial day weekend our oven broke and started leaking gas into our home. I called the emergency maintenance number and removed myself, my baby, and dog from the house. Maintenance failed to

show up to fix the problem. I called multiple times and it wasn't until I called the fire department that a maintenance guy showed up. Luckily, there was no toxic levels of gas in our home from the problem. The maintenance guy was VERY rude to me during this incident. He yelled at me, waved his hand in my face and proceeded to tell me that this was not an emergency and he was not going to fix it that weekend. After going to the housing office the previous week to complain, I finally got someone to come out to fix the problem with the oven. The neighborhood is full of condemned houses and is not a safe neighborhood for military families to be living in. The neighborhood is open to civilians and they take section 8 vouchers in this neighborhood. They charge civilians less to live there than they charge the military families. Military families get ALL of their BAH taken from them to live in these houses. The neighborhood is so filled with crime. Houses and cars are broken into every day and the local police cannot keep up with it. I felt unsafe in my own home every day that we lived there.