

## **Plaintiffs' Leadership Statement in Response to the Government's "Elective Option" for Resolution of Certain Camp Lejeune Justice Act Claims**

After thirteen months of silence, the Department of the Navy has expressed an intent to make settlement offers in the near future, and we are encouraged by that. But it is important to acknowledge that the Navy's proposal does not provide a just resolution for the majority of claimants. It does not address many illnesses linked to the contaminated Camp Lejeune water, including illnesses that the VA itself treats as "presumptively service-connected" to service at Camp Lejeune. And, with regard to the illnesses the Navy does address—some of the most severe and relentless conditions caused by the poisons—the Navy's framework does not provide compensation based on the relative severity of injuries or any other measure of harm, such as the presence of multiple diseases or conditions.

For many claimants, therefore, the Navy's proposal is inadequate or simply unavailable. And for those claimants, we commit to continuing our pursuit of full and fair compensation both through litigation and through our continued work with the Department of Justice to develop a global-resolution framework, under which we intend to seek higher settlement values than those set by the Navy.

That said, we also acknowledge that those poisoned by the water on Camp Lejeune, and their families, have differing needs, and the Navy has outlined an approach to resolution that could satisfy the needs of those who would prefer a discounted settlement amount in exchange for a shorter wait time. Those who have an urgent need for compensation should have an expedited avenue for relief, and we support injured individuals in whatever process they choose.

In short, we remain dedicated to serving the best interests of each claimant, whether that be through the Navy's limited-use resolution program, through litigation, or through a global resolution with the Department of Justice.