

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 5, 2018

Mr. Tim Byrne  
CEO of Lincoln Military Housing  
2000 McKinney Ave.  
Suite 1000  
Dallas, TX 75201

The Honorable James Mattis  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Byrne and Secretary Mattis,

We are deeply concerned and disappointed about recent reports of unsuitable housing conditions at Camp Pendleton. Members of our military and their families sacrifice greatly to keep our nation safe, and the very least we can do in return is ensure their housing is safe and sanitary. We urge Lincoln Military Housing to work with the Department of Defense (DOD) to immediately resolve the issues identified in these reports.

On November 1, 2018, *Reuters* published a story detailing the troubling conditions at Camp Pendleton and other bases around the country. Some military families have been living in homes infested with mice and their excrement. They've experienced cockroach infestations, water leaking from smoke detectors, toxic mold blooms, and mushrooms sprouting from the carpet. They've endured leaking roofs, fire hazards, and lead-based paint. All of these conditions can create serious and costly health issues for the parents and children inhabiting these homes. With more than 7,000 family housing units at Camp Pendleton, the potential impact to families is immense and alarming.

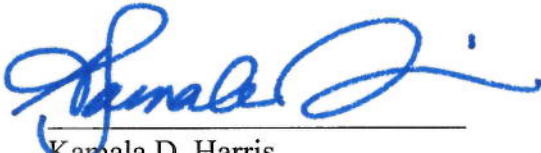
In such situations, the legal protections available to members of our Armed Forces who live in military housing are limited. Generally, California tenants are entitled to rent property that meets basic safety and health standards. If a Marine or Sailor lives outside of military housing, they are allowed to withhold rent for unresolved repairs, sue their landlord, or move without notice. However, some of these protections are not available to families who live in military housing.

As long as these disturbing living conditions are allowed to continue, many Camp Pendleton Marines will be unable to deploy with the peace of mind that their families are safe at home. We are extremely troubled that a culture has developed that appears to prize profit at the expense of the health and safety of our military families. In spite of current policy limitations, cooperation between the military and privatized housing companies should provide the best protection of our military families possible.

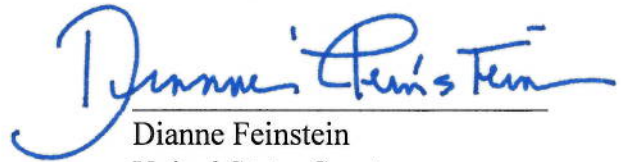
Accordingly, we respectfully request responses from Lincoln Military Housing and the Department of Defense to the following questions by November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018:

- Will Lincoln Military Housing and the DOD provide a coordinated strategy to remedy the problems that have been allowed to persist in Camp Pendleton's military housing?
- Will Lincoln Military Housing and the DOD provide a coordinated assessment of other military bases where similar corrective actions should be implemented?
- Will the DOD provide a plan to ensure that those impacted by these conditions receive medical treatment?
- Will the DOD provide recommendations on policy or legislative solutions to allow for greater accountability in public-private housing partnerships?
- Will the DOD provide a report on military housing partner companies that have similarly been unable to meet the minimum health and safety standards expected for military families?

Sincerely,



Kamala D. Harris  
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

CC: Secretary Richard V. Spencer  
General Robert B. Neller