

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

Majority (202) 225-5051
Minority (202) 225-5074

Opening Statement of Jason Chaffetz
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service,
And the District of Columbia
June 10, 2009

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing today.

Back in 2001 and 2002, the old District of Columbia Subcommittee, then chaired by Rep. Connie Morella, held hearings on the status of the cleanup of contaminated sites in the Spring Valley area. Today we will revisit some of the issues discussed in those hearings to see what sort of progress has been made and what the prospects are for the future.

After the United States of America declared war against the German Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1917, the Spring Valley area was used as a testing site by the Army for munitions and chemical agents. It is now referred to as a Formerly Used Defense site.

Today Spring Valley is home to American University and hundreds of homes, first developed in the 1920s.

In 2002, the GAO issued a report on the environmental contamination and uncertainties which were continuing to affect the progress of the Spring Valley cleanup. The report evaluated the health risks associated with the hazards identified and removed from Spring Valley, and evaluated the Corps' estimated cost and cleanup schedule.

It is important for all to know and for the witnesses to address whether or not there are remaining health risks, and to clarify the duration and costs of the cleanup. Clearly, the federal government has a responsibility to make sure that contaminants are removed.

I look forward to learning about the status of the Spring Valley cleanup from our distinguished witnesses.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.