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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2022

22-027

Statement on Department of Defense decision to defuel and permanently close Red Hill fuel storage facility

HONOLULU – In response to the [decision announced today by Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III](#) to defuel and permanently close the US Navy’s Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility, the Hawai’i Department of Health (DOH) issued the following statements.

“We’re pleased with the Secretary of Defense’s decision to do the right thing for the people and environment of Hawai’i,” said Director of Health Dr. Elizabeth Char, FACEP. “This decision comes late for the Navy water system users who have borne the greatest burden of this humanitarian disaster, but it’s nevertheless reassuring that the imminent threat posed by this troubled facility will finally be addressed. We are anxiously awaiting receipt of the DOD’s written plan and a path forward to ensure independence of the Navy’s contractor.”

“We’re encouraged by the Secretary of Defense’s promise of an action plan for safe and expeditious defueling of the Red Hill facility,” said Deputy Director of Environmental Health Kathleen Ho. “On behalf of the people and environment of Hawai’i, we will remain vigilant to hold the Navy accountable to render the drinking water supply safe and to address future contamination concerns.”

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