

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 17, 2020

Senator Jim Risch
Chairman
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
438 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Robert Menendez
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Risch and Ranking Member Menendez:

We write following the release of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report, *An Assessment of Illness in U.S. Government Employees and their Families at Overseas Embassies*, detailing deeply concerning evidence that mysterious brain injuries in U.S. diplomats overseas are the result of directed radio frequency attacks. We have long engaged on this matter and met with several of those suffering and believe that these new findings suggest U.S. personnel abroad continue to be at risk. Congressional oversight is necessary to ensure the U.S. government can effectively respond going forward.

After reviewing four potential sources for the injuries suffered by federal employees in Cuba and China, NAS researchers determined that a “directed, pulsed radio frequency energy” is the most likely cause – suggesting that those injured were victims of a directed attack. Like the patients, we believe that the most plausible explanation is that these individuals were injured at the hands of an adversary. Further, the report states concern for future incidents and details concrete steps that the State Department should follow to better respond to and understand these incidents.

While this report provides new and welcome information to a seemingly inexplicable issue, there are still many questions that remain unanswered. Should these injuries be the result of a targeted attack from an adversary as the report’s evidence suggests, this poses an imminent threat to U.S. national security and warrants a thorough response from Congress. It is crucial that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hear testimony from both NAS and the State Department in order to fully inform our response. Therefore, we respectfully request the full Committee hold a hearing in the next Congress on the issue with two panels of witnesses: one with the Secretary of State on the Department’s response thus far; and another with medical experts and scientists from NAS to further elaborate on their findings and recommendations.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your timely reply.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator