

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

April 11, 2023

Lieutenant General Sean Bernabe
Commander, III Corps and Fort Hood
761st Tank Battalion Ave., Building 1001
Fort Hood, Texas 76544

Dear Lieutenant General Bernabe:

We are writing to express our deep concern regarding the circumstances surrounding Private Ana Basaldua Ruiz's death. Once again, Fort Hood has failed the young women who stand up to serve our country and entrust themselves to the Army's care.

In November 2020 the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee determined that your installation's sexual harassment prevention and response programs were ineffective and that Fort Hood's command climate presented a "permissive environment for sexual assault and sexual harassment." Before her death, Private Basaldua Ruiz told her family that she was being sexually harassed by both peers and a superior. The permissive environment identified years ago has not been eliminated and has claimed another victim.

We understand that Army Criminal Investigation Command is actively investigating Private Basaldua Ruiz's case. We urge you to ensure that the investigation into both Ana's death and the sexual harassment she endured before she died is complete, thorough, and impartial. It has been less than a year since another soldier, Private Denisha Montgomery Smith, was found dead in her barracks room in Germany. The investigations into Denisha's case left her family with more questions than answers. Ana's family deserves answers.

We expect Fort Hood to take this case very seriously. We expect you to provide all necessary resources to secure justice for Ana and to ensure that her death is the last of its kind.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

CC: Inspector General of the Department of Defense, Robert Storch