

Durbin Receives Update on Ft. Hood and Illinois Army Reserve Investigations From Army Secretary

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today spoke to U.S. Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy to receive an update on the concluded Fort Hood review following the death of Pfc. Vanessa Guillen, who was determined to be a sexual harassment victim. The findings of the independent civilian review board were released Tuesday, and cited widespread problems and a “toxic culture,” where leaders fail to investigate crimes and lack of confidence in punishing offenders created a “permissive environment for sexual assault and harassment.” At least 14 Army leaders, including a general, were fired or suspended for these systematic leadership failures.

Durbin also received an update on the status of an ongoing investigation into the mishandling of sexual assault allegations at the 416th Theater Engineering Command (TEC), an Army Reserve unit in Darien, Illinois. Following an [*Associated Press*](#) article

in January, Durbin and Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) [wrote](#) to the Army calling for a comprehensive investigation into the handling of such claims as well as a review of any allegations within the 416th of reprisal against victims of sexual assault or harassment and advocates. The fact-finding mission of the investigation concluded this summer, with disciplinary action recommended against dozens of soldiers and officers, including generals.

“Sexual misconduct and pervasive cultural problems that lead to mishandling of cases are unacceptable, within the Army and across our military,” Durbin said. “Today I received an update from Secretary McCarthy on what the Army will do to ensure a tragedy like Pfc. Guillen’s death never happens again, and when we can expect resolution about the mishandling of sexual assault and harassment allegations by Command leaders at the 416th in Darien, Illinois. I remain deeply concerned and it is critical for the Army to provide survivors with the resources they need and protect them against reprisal.”