



SB 225 – Environment – Publicly Owned Treatment Works – PFAS Monitoring

Testimony before

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 9, 2023

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mdm. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Virginia Smith, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in support of SB225, which would require the owner or operator of a publicly owned treatment works to monitor and report PFAS. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the leadership of Senator Elfreth in sponsoring this important legislation.

It has been found that exposure to PFAS chemicals at high levels can cause thyroid disease, higher cholesterol levels, kidney and testicular cancer, ulcerative colitis, pregnancy-induced hypertension, liver damage, and kidney disease. At lower levels, it has been found to reduce the immune system's response, but research is continuing that could show even low-level exposure could cause much more severe concerns. For this reason, it is necessary to know what the population's exposure is to these chemicals and how well our removal processes work.

This bill works towards this need by requiring that PFAS levels be monitored and reported in effluent, influent and biosolids of publicly owned treatment works. Knowing how much ends in the effluent and then into the public drinking water will allow us to know the exposure level (from this one source). While comparing the levels in the influent versus the effluent will show the success in removing these chemicals. Both pieces of information are necessary for the public health of Maryland.

For these reasons, we support SB225.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

Virginia Smith
10209 Rutland Round Rd
Columbia, MD 21044