

**BENJAMIN BROOKS**  
*Legislative District 10*  
Baltimore County

Education, Energy, and the  
Environment Committee  
Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal  
Service Program Workgroup



**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

*Annapolis Office*  
James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 303  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3606 · 301-858-3606  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3606  
Benjamin.Brooks@senate.state.md.us

*District Office*  
Windsor Mill Office  
8419 Liberty Road, Suite B  
Windsor Mill, Maryland 21244  
410-496-4037

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 345**  
**Pesticides – PFAS Chemicals - Prohibition**

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
February 18, 2025

Chairman Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on SB 345 - Pesticides - PFAS Chemicals - Prohibitions. This bill requires the Department of Agriculture (MDA) to maintain a list of registered pesticides that contain PFAS as an active ingredient and phase out known PFAS pesticides from being registered and sold in our state.

PFAS or “forever chemicals” are extremely persistent in the environment and have long term impacts on people, animals and life in general. PFAS compounds have carbon-fluorine bonds, one of the strongest in chemistry. These bonds make PFAS incredibly stable. They resist heat, water and oil.

As defined by current Maryland statute and many other (22) states, PFAS is a class of fluorinated organic chemicals that contain at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom. PFAS stands for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances. SB 345 provides continuity to existing statute, by relying upon that existing definition.

PFAS- pesticides present a broader risk to Marylanders and our environment because everyone is subjected to PFAS ‘forever pesticides’ which are widely used in our state. Through the continuous use of PFAS pesticides, these forever chemicals enter our state’s waters, vegetation, and have detrimental impacts on human, aquatic, and terrestrial health. One exposure to PFAS can last more than a decade in your body. At very low levels of contact, PFAS are known to cause kidney, testicular, prostate, breast cancer, birth defects and developmental damage in infants, childhood obesity, thyroid disease, high cholesterol, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, and impaired immune function.

Maryland Department of Agriculture registers over 14,000 pesticides for use in Maryland each year. Of these, just over 1000 have PFAS as their active ingredient. These pesticides are used in schools, day cares, hospitals where our most vulnerable people are exposed to these products. They are also used on farms and on yards, contaminating food, waters and putting people at risk. Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has issued fish advisories,

PFAS has been detected in school drinking water fountains and a first of its kind study conducted by Johns Hopkins University and Maryland Pesticide Foundation Network has found it is in every blood sample from participants across the state. “Even with the small sample size (41 participants), it is clear that most Marylanders have this in their blood”, according to Dr. Ana Rule, assistant professor at Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Other bills this year are working to limit PFAS exposure from sludge, which is important, but it is far more effective and economical to limit its environmental exposure, by pro-actively restricting the use of pesticide with an active PFAS ingredient.

SB 345 requires the Maryland Department of Agriculture to develop and maintain a list of registered pesticides that list PFAS chemicals as an active ingredient. Further, it creates a process for phasing out these forever pesticides. Specifically, by January 1, 2026, the Department will post a list of registered PFAS pesticides on its website and distribute the list to certified pesticide applicators. Beginning June 1, 2026, a person may not use a PFAS pesticide, listed by the department, at a health care facility, a school, a daycare operation, for residential lawn care, or commercial mosquito spraying operations. Beginning June 1, 2027, MDA may not register a PFAS pesticide for sale in the state and beginning June 1, 2028, a person may not use a PFAS pesticide for all other uses, including commercial and agricultural applications.

There are PFAS-free alternatives, and of the 14,000 pesticides registered in the State of Maryland, those known to have PFAS, all have alternatives that are already registered. We must promote and encourage these alternatives to enact change. Turning off the PFAS pesticides tap will significantly limit the exposure, especially to our most vulnerable children. The State must be at the forefront of protecting future generations against needless and repeated exposure to PFAS pesticides.

For these reasons, I am asking for a favorable report on SB 345.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin T. Brooks".

Benjamin Brooks