



UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND

MARYLAND FIRE AND RESCUE INSTITUTE

Michael E. Cox, Jr., Executive Director

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February 10, 2020

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chairman
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Committee Members:

I am writing to communicate our position of support for Senate Bill 420- Public Safety Firefighting Foam and Perfluoroalkyl/Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS).

As you know, there are tremendous concerns regarding these chemicals. Both of these chemicals have been found to be carcinogens with health hazards to humans and animals. The Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute at the University of Maryland recognized the potential problems associated with the use of firefighting foam in the training environment many years ago and ceased using these products in the training setting.

As the State's comprehensive training and education system for all EMS/Fire/Rescue programs we train on average more than 35,000 emergency responders. We are happy to report that this product is not used at any of our seven statewide training facilities. In fact, we have moved to a healthy and environmentally safe alternative such as dish soap to demonstrate the application of firefighting foam used in fire training.

I want to thank you for continued support of the EMS/Fire/Rescue Service. I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Cox, Jr., MS, CFO, EFO, NRP
Executive Director

MEC/mec

CC: Assistant Director F. Patrick Marlatt, Special Operations
Acting Assistant Director Stephan Cox, Field Operations
My Files