



January 29, 2021

Testimony on HB0022
Environment – PFAS Chemicals – Prohibitions and Requirements.
Health and Government Operations

Position: Favorable

My name is Katherine, a resident of Baltimore, District 43. I am a member of the Sunrise Movement Baltimore, a movement led by young people fighting against the climate crisis. This testimony represents my support for HB0022, the Environment – PFAS Chemicals – Prohibitions and Requirements.

Why PFAS need to be regulated:

PFAS chemicals don't break down in the environment, earning them the nickname "forever chemicals." These are carcinogenic chemicals that build up in our bodies over time, a dangerous and potentially lethal combination. In Maryland, we know there is contamination in drinking water and near many military bases, including right here in Annapolis.¹ This Maryland State legislative session, we have an opportunity to act on this imminent and immediate public health threat. We must act now to turn off the tap to these forever chemicals and treat them like the hazardous materials they are. We must regulate the continued introduction of PFAS into our state's drinking water and seafood.

As explained in the Bay Journal, "In the six-state Chesapeake Bay watershed, there are at least 18 sites where PFAS have been detected. That could mean that relatively few industrial facilities in the region have made or used PFAS — or it may mean that no one's looked very hard."²

PFAS are still widespread in both production and use. Safeguarding against PFAS chemicals as a class is the best way to protect human health. Trying to regulate one chemical at a time will only leave us in an endless game of whack-a-mole. Marylanders deserve the same public health protections from PFAS that we see in other states. Maryland firefighters shouldn't have to suffer from exposure to toxic chemicals, especially when there are safer alternatives.

¹ Environmental Working Group map of PFAS Contamination, https://www.ewg.org/interactive-maps/2019_pfas_contamination/map/

² Chesapeake states grapple with 'forever chemical' contaminating drinking water, Bay Journal, July 15, 2019, https://www.bayjournal.com/article/watershed_states_grapple_with_forever_chemical_contaminating_drinking_water



Why I support this bill:

Toxic chemicals that cause health problems have no right existing in our daily lives and staying around in our environment. I worry about the future health effects to myself and other Marylanders like firefighters who will bear the brunt of the use of these chemicals when we can use safer alternatives. Please regulate PFAS and encourage the use of safer alternatives!

What's in the bill:

- Turns off the tap on new contamination: stops the use of PFAS in firefighting foam (like [WA](#), [NH](#), [CA](#)), food packaging (like [NY](#), [WA](#), [ME](#)), and in rugs and carpets. **In all of these areas there are safer alternatives to PFAS.**
- Protects our air and water by banning the mass disposal of these chemicals by incineration ([NY](#)) and landfilling ([CA](#)).

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for this important legislation.

Sincerely,

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