

February 24, 2022

**FAVORABLE WITH BILL – HB 0570: Health and Government Operations – Pesticides – Mosquito Control Products and PFAS Chemicals**

Ms. Chairwoman and Members of the Committee,

We are writing in strong support of House Bill 570 on behalf of Waterkeepers Chesapeake, a coalition of seventeen Waterkeepers, Riverkeepers, and Coastkeepers working to make the waters of the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays swimmable and fishable. As we here at Waterkeepers work to protect and maintain the ability of the public to safely enjoy the waters of our State, we are also in support of restricting the use of PFAS, a class of chemicals that the Environmental Protection Agency says can cause harmful health effects in humans. PFAS., which have been linked to cancer and other severe illnesses, have been found in 75% of drinking water tested by the Maryland Department of the Environment. Ten states have taken strong action to restrict toxic PFAS, but Maryland has yet to act.

Some pesticides used for mosquito control have been found to contain PFAS. House Bill 570 provides Maryland the opportunity to take a step towards significantly reducing the exposure of our citizens to PFAS chemicals. The PFAS-free Mosquito Control Products Bill would establish the requirement of testing widely used mosquito control products in Maryland for PFAS contamination. The bill would effectively ban all use of PFAS from pesticide products used for mosquito control by the Maryland Department of Agriculture and private vendors in order to protect the environment and prioritize and protect the health of Marylanders to avoid a major health crisis.

Waterkeepers Chesapeake supports House Bill 570 and its expressed goals. By preventing the harmful use of PFAS in pesticides, the state can show its priorities are with protecting communities and the environment, as opposed to the chemical industry. Therefore, we believe these requirements would properly be carried out under **House Bill 570** in order to establish criteria to **ensure appropriate testing and regulation of pesticide products to better protect all Marylanders' health, adults—especially pregnant women—and children.**

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 570.

Alexander Villazon  
Waterkeepers Chesapeake