



HB0275: Environment – PFAS Chemicals – Prohibitions and Requirements (George “Walter” Taylor Act)

Health and Government Operations

February 9, 2022

Claire Miller, Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights

FAVORABLE

Chairman Delegate Pendergrass, Vice-Chair Delegate Pena-Melnyk, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee

I’m writing to ask for you to vote for and pass HB0275, because PFAS contamination poses serious risks for the public health of Marylanders. As citizens, we rely on our government to protect us from harm in our environment and from the goods and services we consume. It is very disturbing that PFAS, also known as forever chemicals, have infiltrated our drinking water and our seafood in Maryland, and the public is exposed to these chemicals in consumer products like cookware and in food packaging. The federal government failed to regulate these chemicals, so it is up to the state to act.

The Maryland Department of the Environment found PFAS in 75% of the drinking water it tested. We also know of contamination in and around more than a dozen military sites in the state and in seafood and oysters in our creeks. Recent studies also found high levels of PFAS chemicals in [seafood, drinking water](#), and at various [military sites in Maryland](#).

Exposure to PFAS is linked to cancer and other severe illnesses including liver and kidney disease, hormone disruption, immune suppression, reproductive problems and developmental issues. Other states have already taken action and it is time for Maryland to do the same.

HB0275 restricts the use and disposal of PFAS chemicals in Maryland

- Stops the use of PFAS in firefighting foam (like CA, CT, IL, ME, NH, NY, VT, WA), food packaging (like CA, CT, ME, MN, NY, VT, WA), and in rugs and carpets (like Lowes and Home Depot). **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).
- Requires disclosure that firefighter gear contains PFAS when selling it in the state including jackets, pants, shoes, gloves, helmets and respiratory equipment.

The public in Maryland depends on our government to protect us from harmful chemicals. We have evidence of both the harm these chemicals cause and that it exists in our drinking water and our food supply. Your constituents and the people of Maryland are relying on you to take action and restrict the use and disposal of PFAS chemicals in Maryland.

We ask that you vote favorably on HB-0275 and support the firefighters and the public to restrict the use and disposal of PFAS chemicals in Maryland.

Sincerely,

Claire Miller, Communications Director
Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights