SHELLY HETTLEMAN Legislative District 11 Baltimore County

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area



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TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN SB158 PESTICIDE REGISTRATION - PFAS TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Polyfluoralkyl substances (PFAS) are man-made "forever" chemicals that have been given that name because there is no known safe way to dispose of them and they do not break down in the environment. They exist in our air, land, and water. Why is this a problem? Because many, many studies have demonstrated that exposure to PFAS is linked to cancer, kidney disease, birth defects, an impaired immune system and other serious long term health consequences.

Last year, we recognized the harm in PFAS and stepped in to prohibit their sale in rugs and carpets, food packaging, fire-fighting foams and personal protective equipment.

Unfortunately, Maryland has found alarming levels of PFAS in our Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, as well as in fish. In fact, the Maryland Department of the Environment issued a warning in October, 2021 against eating three kinds of fish caught in Piscataway Creek in Prince George's County.

Permanone 30-30 is a pesticide for mosquito control that was sprayed by the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) in 2,100 communities each year and was found by an EPAapproved lab to contain two PFAS chemicals. Another insecticide, Mavrik, which is listed by MDA as an option for mosquito control, was found by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to be contaminated with PFAS. Other chemicals are used by private companies around homes, schools, and businesses, and sink into our crops and food system. It is extremely difficult to control one's exposure to these chemicals with the reality that they are being sprayed ubiquitously throughout the state. How does this bill address these issues?

SB158 will protect Marylanders and our air, earth, and water by requiring manufacturers of mosquito control products in the state to provide annual independent lab testing and certification to document that the pesticide is PFAS-free beginning in January, 2024. And, as of January, 2026, manufacturers of all pesticides must provide this same testing to demonstrate the pesticide is PFAS-free. These labs are accessible and testing is inexpensive.

Today you will hear from experts on why we need to turn off the tap on PFAS in mosquitocontrol products and other pesticides. I want to stress and assure you that there are still products that MDA and others have that they can employ. We <u>should not</u> be spraying Marylanders inadvertently with PFAS, and it should be the manufacturers that test for safety. I urge your support for SB158. Thank you