



February 2, 2023

**SB 158 Pesticide Registration – PFAS Testing – Requirements**

**The Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment (EEE)**

**Testimony of Jason Davidson, Friends of the Earth**

**In Support**

Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Committee,

On behalf of Friends of the Earth and its more than 30,000 members and supporters in Maryland, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report for SB 158.

SP 158 would prohibit the sale of any pesticides containing PFAS by 2026. Manufacturers would be required to test their products for contamination and submit a report in order to be registered for sale and use in Maryland. **Pesticides containing PFAS would be replaced with tested products shown to be PFAS-free.** Given past findings of contamination, this testing is necessary.

Exposure to PFAS is linked to cancer and other long-term health impacts. [Scientists in multiple labs](#) have found PFAS in mosquito control products and common pesticides used in agriculture. A recent study found PFAS contaminated corn, bean and peanut crops grown in fields that were sprayed with 6 commonly used pesticides that had tested in the millions of parts per trillion levels of PFAS. Of great concern is that this study found PFAS contaminates the crops themselves at thousands of times the EPA safe drinking water level of 0.02 ppt, increasing human and animal exposure through consumption of the contaminated food. This continues even after spraying is stopped because of the persistence of PFAS contamination in the soil.

in response to concerns regarding PFAS in pesticides, EPA banned 12 PFAS chemicals for intentional use as inert ingredients in pesticides late last year. However, EPA is not currently requiring ongoing testing of pesticides for unintentional contamination.

PFAS are commonly referred to as “forever chemicals,” due to their inability to break down in the environment. **Inadvertent spraying of these chemicals** through broad mosquito control applications and agricultural use **poses a significant risk to residents, our food supply, as well as local waterways and turf, due to drift.**

These pesticides may have been contaminated by PFAS present in their plastic containers or PFAS may be intentionally added by manufacturers as an inert ingredient; either way, there is evidence that even low-dose container contamination can be very dangerous to humans. While EPA has banned 12 PFAS chemicals for use as inert pesticide ingredients, EPA has also left the door open for their use based on industry testing.

**PFAS disrupts the human endocrine system.** A January 2022 [study](#) in Annual Reviews found that children are particularly vulnerable to endocrine disruption, and that **there are essentially no safe levels of exposure for them.** Earlier studies have produced [similar findings](#).



**Protections are necessary at the state level. While the Biden administration has made PFAS regulation a priority, early results have been insufficient.** EPA has not taken steps to ensure pesticide manufacturers have to test regularly for possible PFAS contamination, leaving it up to Maryland to eliminate a potentially significant source of PFAS pollution.

**PFAS also has significant impacts on wildlife, including honeybees.** Meta-analyses have found adverse affects across a number of species and geographies, and have found that PFAS can bioaccumulate at a global scale. Research shows potential adverse affects in species ranging from fish, to birds, to mammals, to honeybees. PFAS has even been found in the honey of bees exposed to the forever chemicals.

Due to these substantial risks, Friends of the Earth strongly urges a favorable report on SB 158

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