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FAVORABLE REPORT – HB 319: Pesticide Regulation – PFAS Testing – Requirements

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

Potomac Riverkeeper Network is in strong support of Bill HB 319 on behalf of our members and Communities that depend on clean water for drinking and recreation. The mission of PRKN is to protect the public's right to clean water in the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers and enhance the safety of our drinking water, protect healthy river habitats and enhance the public use and enjoyment. The wide spread pollution of the PFAS compounds here in Maryland is becoming alarmingly clear that the State of Maryland must set forth protections of our water resources. PFAS chemicals are a family of pollutants of over [12,000](#) and are linked to numerous cancers, birth defects and diminished immune systems. PFAS chemicals do not break down easily and have been referred to as the "Forever Chemical". Not only are PFAS chemicals toxic and do not break down, but these chemicals also build up in your system over time. The more exposure we have to PFAS chemicals the more humans will be at risk and threat of serious health impacts.

The source of PFAS chemicals originated with the use of industrial and commercial products like AFFF, a firefighting foam used by the military and Fire Departments across the Country. Now, the family of PFAS chemicals is in many commercial products that we use every day, which ends up in our waste water and into our groundwater and streams. These are indirect pathways of PFAS pollution that need to be addressed; however, **PFAS in pesticides is a direct application onto our water resources. Since mosquitoes and other insect pests are more of a burden in water related areas, the exposure of PFAS pesticides is directly impacting the water resources of Maryland that provide drinking water to millions of people.** The Potomac River is the number one source of Maryland's Drinking water from western most counties to the urban metropolis of D.C.

A recent study in the [Journal of Hazardous Materials Letters, "Targeted Analysis and Total Oxidizable Precursor Assay of Several Pesticides for PFAS,"](#) found PFOS (a legacy PFAS) in 6 out of 10 tested insecticides at levels ranging from 4 million to 19 million parts-per-trillion (ppt). For reference, the EPA's current [lifetime health advisory for PFOS in drinking water is 0.02 ppt](#)). The study conducted on a USDA research field was led by Steven Lasee, who was at Texas Tech at the time of the study. Malathion, one of the



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most commonly applied insecticides in the world, which is also used in Maryland, was found to contain PFAS in this study. Based on the 6 PFAS-contaminated pesticides tested in the study, **Maryland registers 346 pesticides products containing these active ingredients, amplifying concern these similar products may also contain PFAS.** Here are two other examples of pesticides used in Maryland that have PFAS chemicals:

- *Permanone 30-30, a pesticide for mosquito control that was sprayed by Maryland Dept. of Agriculture (MDA) in 2,100 Maryland communities last year, was initially found by an EPA-approved lab to contain two PFAS chemicals — 3,500 ppt of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and approximately 630 ppt of another PFAS, hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA).*
- *The insecticide, Mavrik, which MDA lists as an option for its Mosquito Control Program, was found by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to be contaminated with PFAS at 16,703 ppt.*

The direct exposure of PFAS chemicals to Maryland’s water resources is compounding another source of PFAS contamination to our Communities through the increasing levels of PFAS in fish tissue. Science has shown PFAS is causing harm to [fish and wildlife](#). The Maryland Department of the Environment has recently issued [fish consumption](#) advisories for Piscataway Creek. **The EPA has [data](#) that shows fish in the Potomac River from Cumberland Maryland to the District of Columbia have extremely high levels of PFAS chemicals in fish tissue.** PRKN is working with USGS fisheries biologists as they investigate the [levels of PFAS in small mouth bass, one the most important game fish in Maryland and a source of food for many subsistence families.](#) **The levels of PFAS chemicals in small mouth bass in Maryland average 500,000 parts per trillion (ppt).** Eating one fish is the equivalent of drinking PFAS contaminated drinking water at 70 ppt for a month. The direct spraying of pesticides with PFAS chemicals will continue to increase the threat of contaminating our drinking water and polluting our fisheries; which will put all Marylanders at risk for significant health impacts. It is imperative that Maryland act now and take the necessary steps to protect our water resources.

For the reasons stated in this testimony, we urge a favorable report on HB 319.

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