

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND ENGINEERING

**Submitted to:** The House Health & Government Affairs Committee  
**Testimony on:** **HB 319 - Pesticide Regulation – PFAS Testing – Requirements**  
**Submitted by:** **Ana Marie Rule, PhD , Board member, Maryland Pesticide Education Network**  
**Position:** Favorable  
**Hearing Date:** February 21, 2023

My name is Ana Maria Rule; I am Assistant Professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in the department of Environmental Health and Engineering. The impacts of pesticides on public health have been an issue of professional concern of mine for many years, and the recent revelations of pesticides containing PFAS has increased my existing concern. *The opinions expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Johns Hopkins University.* I am submitting this written testimony **in support of HB 319**, which would ban all uses of PFAS from pesticide products that are registered for use and sale in Maryland.

As an exposure scientist focused on Public Environmental Health research, I am concerned that PFAS, which we know is a family of chemicals that persist in the environment and are associated with adverse health effects, have been found by multiple researchers in insecticides and larvicides used in Maryland for mosquito control and other pest and land care management. Dr. Lasees’s study discussed at today’s hearing, found 6 of 10 pesticides with extraordinarily high levels in the millions of parts per trillion in agriculture fields, including imidacloprid which is also being used indoors in some Maryland health care settings and by an unknown number of pest control vendors in our state who are most likely unaware of this recent study.

This is concerning because of the persistence of PFAS in the human body and the environment, which means that with every application, we are adding to the human and environmental burden, and increasing the amount of PFAS that people are exposed to through food, air, and water.

The existing research to date suggests that exposure to PFAS leads to changes in liver function, increased risk of kidney and testicular cancer, decreased vaccine response in children, increased risk of high blood pressure in pregnant women, and decreases in infant birth weights. Unfortunately, similar health effects have been associated with exposure to pesticides, adding to the environmental and health burden I mentioned earlier.

I am very concerned about the fact that there is no systematic testing of mosquito control products or any of the pesticides allowed in Maryland, especially since there is no research on the effects of combining PFAS and pesticides, although we know that they both cause serious health effects, especially in vulnerable populations like children and pregnant women.

**By passing HB 319 “Pesticide Regulation – PFAS Testing – Requirements” Bill**, this committee has the opportunity to truly protect the health of Maryland citizens. We need products to routinely be tested, so that we stop adding to the already huge chemical burden of our environment.

Thank you for your consideration,



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