



Committee: Health and Government Operations
Testimony on: HB0319 - Pesticide Registration – PFAS Testing – Requirements Bill
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 21, 2022

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB319. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB319.

Beginning January 1, 2024, the bill prohibits the Secretary of Agriculture from registering a pesticide for use against mosquitoes in the State unless the pesticide distributor provides independent lab testing and certification to document that the pesticide is free of PFAS. By January 1, 2026, manufacturers of *all* pesticides must submit this same testing to prove the pesticide is PFAS-free.

PFAS or per- or polyfluoroalkyl substances are known as “forever chemicals,” because they do not break down in the environment. These chemicals have been linked to a number of human health impacts including, kidney, testicular, and breast cancer. Alarming levels of PFAS have been detected in Chesapeake Bay waters and tributaries and fish. In fact, the Maryland Department of the Environment was forced to issue a warning against eating three fish species found in Piscataway Creek in Prince Georges County due to PFAS levels.

HB319 requires testing for pesticides used in mosquito control first. Permethrin 30-30 was sprayed by the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) in 2,100 communities last year. This widely used pesticide was initially found by an EPA-approved lab to contain two PFAS chemicals. Mavrik, another mosquito control pesticide listed by MDA for use in Maryland, was found by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to be contaminated with PFAS.

HB319 also requires testing for all pesticides used in Maryland by January 2026. For example, Malathion, one of the most commonly-applied insecticides, was found to contain PFAS, as was Imidacloprid, which also has been reported to cause of pollinator decline.

To protect the health of mosquito control and agricultural workers, the food grown in Maryland, and the communities and ecosystems exposed to pesticide application, we must be sure that the pesticides used are PFAS-free. For these reasons, we recommend a **FAVORABLE** report for HB319 in committee.