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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

House Bill 319 - Pesticide Registration - PFAS Testing - Requirements
Health and Government Operations Committee
February 21, 2023

SUPPORT

Background: HB319 would phase out the use of pesticides in Maryland that contain PFAS, per- or polyfluoroalkyl substances. Exposure to these “forever chemicals” may lead to serious health impacts. This bill would require all manufacturers of mosquito control products in the state to provide annual independent lab testing and lab certification to document that the pesticide is PFAS-free, beginning January 1, 2024. As of January 1, 2026, manufacturers of all pesticides must provide this same testing to prove the pesticide is PFAS-free.

Written Comments: The Jewish concept of *tikkun olam* means to repair the world in which we live. Furthermore, Jewish law clearly states that we are not to destroy the public domain, meaning our beautiful State. HB319 falls perfectly in line with these two principles. If passed, this bill would reduce the number of PFAS contaminants in our air, water, and soil, making Maryland safer and healthier for all.

The Baltimore Jewish Council and its faith-based members are committed to the practice of *tikkun olam*. As the advocacy arm of The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, we represent organizations that work to educate the community on sustainability and make strides towards repairing the world. One of these entities is *The Pearlstone Center* in Reisterstown, MD, a conference center and farm that employs and teaches sustainable practices. This bill will directly support the mission of this establishment, by ensuring that the practices at their facility are free from harmful, PFAS-contaminated pesticides.

We encourage this committee to take a major step towards repairing our world and making us a national leader in sustainability. **The Baltimore Jewish Council urges a favorable report of HB319.**

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.