



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 1153 – Protecting State Waters from PFAS Pollution Act

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee –

Thank you for considering HB 1153, Protecting State Waters from PFAS Pollution Act.

This bill aims to address the problem of PFAS in our water by trying to identify the sources of PFAS discharge. As we have heard in this Committee, PFAS causes significant health risks including higher cholesterol, impacts on liver enzymes, decreased vaccine effectiveness in children, increased risk of high blood pressure, increased risk of many cancers, and decreased infant birth weight. As a body we have banned the use of PFAS in firefighting foam, food packaging, rugs and carpets, and the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) is studying its use in pesticides, per Majority Leader Stein’s bill.

MDE monitors all 437 public water systems to address PFAS contamination and recently reported that 63 of these systems exceed the maximum contaminant levels for PFAS proposed by the EPA. It is critical we address the contamination in these systems and prevent future contamination.

In December 2023, MDE produced the PFAS Action Plan, which was required by the George “Walter” Taylor Act of 2022. That Action Plan, states that MDE will “incorporate new permit requirements for industrial dischargers with reasonable potential to violate water quality for PFAS.” MDE has confirmed their intention to update the Significant Industrial User (SIU) permits to encompass regulations over the discharge of PFAS, underscoring a proactive and reasonable approach to safeguarding our water from these harmful contaminants.

HB 1153 is the next step in implementing this intent within the PFAS Action Plan. We have been in conversations with MDE and have a consensus amendment that changes the bill as introduced, and instead creates a timeline and process to empower MDE to develop standards and plans for continuing their work of regulating PFAS discharge from large industrial users.

As amended, HB 1153 requires MDE to:

- Work with Publicly Owned Treatment Works and Significant Industrial Users with pretreatment permits to identify the facilities that currently and intentionally use PFAS chemicals.

- Develop monitoring and testing criteria for those facilities.
- Work with Publicly Owned Treatment Works and Significant Industrial Users to develop action levels and mitigation plans for addressing PFAS contamination.
- Develop a standard MCL for discharge of individual PFAS that are known to be harmful, as well as total PFAS.
- Produce an interim report or update the PFAS Action Plan with progress made on these requirements by December 1, 2024.

Ensuring our water's purity isn't just a policy choice—it's a non-negotiable commitment to the health and safety of our communities. The Protecting State Waters from PFAS Pollution Act, as amended, is an essential next step to advance our state's public health and clean water and is necessary to avoid millions of dollars of damage.

For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 1153.