



March 11, 2024

Chair Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk

Health and Government Operations Committee

Testimony of Jason Davidson, Friends of the Earth

In Support of HB 1190

Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison and members of the Committee,

On behalf of Friends of the Earth and its more than 30,000 members and supporters in Maryland, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 1190.

- PFAS forever chemicals are a major public health and environmental threat; they should not be intentionally sprayed in Maryland communities.
- Pesticides containing PFAS active ingredients are one of the most prolific gateways for exposing Maryland residents to the harmful effects of PFAS.
- HB 1190 accurately and effectively identifies PFAS active ingredients in pesticides by using existing tools from EPA.

HB 1190 would ban the sale of pesticides containing active ingredients that EPA identifies as PFAS. Pesticide manufacturers would not be required to test for additional PFAS contamination. And there are a number of effective alternatives for all pesticide uses that contain PFAS.

Exposure to PFAS is linked to cancer and other long-term health impacts. Exposure to PFAS through pesticides is a major public health and environmental issue due to both the intentional inclusion of PFAS as active ingredients in pesticides and the unintentional contamination of pesticides through fluorinated containers. This bill addresses the first of those exposure routes.

PFAS are commonly referred to as “forever chemicals,” due to their inability to break down in the environment. Spraying these chemicals through broad mosquito control applications and other routine sprayings poses a significant risk to residents as well as local waterways and turf, due to drift.

HB 1190 defines PFAS by relying on EPA’s own database that classifies chemicals as PFAS. EPA’s existing database uses the broad definition that is also used by 22 states, the U.S. Military and Congress.

PFAS disrupts the human endocrine system. A January 2022 [study](#) in Annual Reviews found that children are particularly vulnerable to endocrine disruption, and that there are essentially no safe levels of exposure for them. Earlier studies have produced [similar findings](#).

Protections are necessary at the state level. While the Biden administration has made PFAS regulation a priority, early results have been insufficient.

**PFAS also has significant impacts on wildlife, including honeybees.** Meta-analyses have found adverse affects across a number of species and geographies, and have found that PFAS can bioaccumulate at a



global scale. Research shows potential adverse affects in species ranging from fish, to birds, to mammals, to honeybees. PFAS has even been found in the honey of bees exposed to the forever chemicals.

Due to these substantial risks, Friends of the Earth strongly urges a favorable report on HB 1190.

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