



P.O. Box 278
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Committee: Health and Government Operations
Testimony on: HB 1190 – Pesticides- PFAS Chemicals- Prohibitions
Position: Support
Hearing Date: March 13, 2024

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club supports HB 1190, which would prohibit the sale of pesticides that list any per and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) as an active ingredient on their label. The bill does not require testing for the presence of PFAS in pesticides but bans sale and use on home lawns, parks, agricultural fields, and healthcare facilities. The health risks from PFAS include elevated cholesterol, decreased immune response, cancer, and reproductive irregularities, as well as risks to pregnant women, potentially causing damage to the developing fetus.¹

The land application of pesticides containing PFAS has resulted in contamination of our waterways. PFAS present in agricultural runoff enter waterways adjacent to farms. The chemicals contaminate streams and do not break down as they enter rivers and ultimately the bay. The prevalence of PFAS in freshwater fish², of which 15 can be found in the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay, require regulatory limits due to their toxicity. The danger of consuming certain fish is greater than drinking water that is laced with these chains of chemicals.

There are thousands of pesticides available in Maryland that do not have PFAS in their active ingredients. Maine and Minnesota have already passed laws prohibiting pesticides containing PFAS from being sold. Maryland should also take the initiative for banning PFAS chemicals since federal agencies such as the EPA are slow in acting. Only suggesting limits on PFAS consumption and voluntary restrictions for industrial production falls short for protecting consumers these from dangerous chemicals. This bill has the power to remove one source of PFAS in agricultural processes, home gardens and lawns, parks, hospitals, food venues, and healthcare facilities.

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club encourages the Committee to provide a favorable report on HB 1190.

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¹ <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas/health-effects/index.html>

² <https://www.fda.gov/food/process-contaminants-food/questions-and-answers-pfas-food>