



COOKWARE SUSTAINABILITY ALLIANCE

Senate Bill 686

Position: Unfavorable

Committee: Senate Education, Energy & the Environment

Date: February 20, 2026

The Cookware Sustainability Alliance (CSA) is an alliance of cookware companies dedicated to providing science-based information about the safety of cookware products for consumers and policymakers to make informed decisions.

We are submitting these comments on SB 686 in opposition and would ask respectfully for an unfavorable report.

The CSA came together in the summer of 2024 to begin advocating for the cookware industry. That was necessary at the time because cookware companies found their products being added to “PFAS product ban” bills around the country. We organized to advocate as an industry. Our message is simple: the material that coats on-stick cookware (sometimes called “Teflon”) is completely safe and has never been tied to human illness. In fact the same material that coats a non-stick pan has been used to coat pacemakers before they’re implanted in humans since the late 1950s.

SB 686 targets PFAS. Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) constitute a diverse group of compounds characterized by fluorinated carbons. This is a broad spectrum of physical and chemical properties across its constituent chemicals. Depending on who you ask, you’ll be told there are 14,000 or 15,000 different types of PFAS.

Within the spectrum of PFAS applications, however, the cookware manufacturing industry occupies a unique position, relying on **fluoropolymers** to create non-stick cooking products. These fluoropolymers, such as **PFTE** (polytetrafluoroethylene), are large molecular structures that are stable, are not water-soluble and therefore cannot be absorbed into the body. They also do not degrade under normal cooking conditions.

On March 5th of last year, we testified before the Maryland House Judiciary Committee on HB 1112, also bringing forward an unfavorable position.

SB 686 suggests to us that nothing has changed in the past year in the thinking or the positions of the advocate groups behind this proposed product ban. However, SB 686 is overly broad and lumps in products that are perfectly safe, and non-toxic, such as non-stick cookware.

But in fact, much *has* changed in the past year vis-à-vis this issue. *There has not been a single state in the country to ban non-stick cookware since June 2024.* State legislatures across the country have listened to us, frankly; they've listened to the science and have agreed that there are significant differences between harmful PFAS on the one hand, like PFOA or PFOS; and safe materials like fluoropolymers, or PTFE.

For example, in just the past 12 months:

- The **New York** state legislature refused to move a PFAS product ban
- The **Vermont** state legislature amended and paused their product ban, to exclude cookware, for two-and-a-half years
- The **Illinois** legislature passed a bill that Governor Pritzker signed into law that banned some PFAS products, but specifically excluded non-stick cookware—and then went on to direct the state's EPA to study fluoropolymers
- **New Mexico** passed and signed into law a PFAS product ban; however, fluoropolymers were specifically excluded from the ban, including non-stick cookware
- The **Oregon** state legislature refused to move a PFAS product ban bill
- The **Nevada** state legislature refused to move a PFAS product ban bill
- **California's** Governor Newsom vetoed a PFAS product ban bill, and his veto message specifically called out his concerns about banning non-stick cookware

Why have each of these state legislatures and Governors refused to ban non-stick cookware over the past year? It's really very simple. All of these policy leaders understand that fluoropolymers, like PTFE, are simply:

1. Non-toxic
2. Not water soluble, so they do not and cannot enter drinking water systems
3. Not able to bio-accumulate, nor are they bio-available.
4. Not environmentally mobile in any way.
5. Too large to penetrate a human cell membrane.

Each of these attributes of PTFE has been proven in independent, refereed, science journal articles.

We ask you to also follow the science. Rather than an indiscriminate ban, we urge the legislature to take a science-based, risk-informed approach that focuses on the highest-risk PFAS, exemptions for essential uses in critical industries, and a clear differentiation of the broad range of chemicals that fall under the very broad PFAS group label.

For these reasons, the Cookware Sustainability Alliance respectfully requests an **unfavorable report** on SB 686.