



SB0686 - PFAS Chemicals - Product Phase Outs and Registration Requirements

Hearing date: Tuesday, February 24, 2026

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Feldman and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Waterkeepers Chesapeake and the below signed organizations respectfully request a FAVORABLE report on SB 686 which establishes a time-line to phase out products if they contain an intentionally added PFAS substance. SB 686 builds on previous legislation passed in Maryland that banned PFAS in firefighter foam, carpets and food packaging.

The Problem

From non-stick cookware to waterproof mascara and carpets, “forever chemicals, also known as PFAS, have spread to every aspect of our daily lives. PFAS are a group of 15,000+ chemicals that have been used by industries and manufacturers since the 1940s for their fire- and grease-resistant properties. Though they are very common, the public is just starting to understand the effects of these forever chemicals on our health. These toxic forever chemicals can enter your body through multiple pathways, including drinking water, food, air and dust, and from multiple common consumer products. According to the CDC, 97% of Americans have PFAS in their blood.

PFAS in the human body, whether short-term or long-term, have been linked to several health effects, including a weakened immune system, high rates of disease such as high cholesterol and liver, thyroid and kidney diseases, and elevated rates of cancer. Pregnant women can experience hypertension, higher risk of gestational diabetes, and premature delivery. Further, a

meta-analysis of birth outcomes showed linkage of PFAS to lower birth weight and size in several important measurements.

What the Bill Does

- Prohibits the sale, or distribution for sale in this state, directly or indirectly or through intermediaries, the following products if they contain an intentionally added PFAS substance:
 - By January 2028: cleaning products, cookware, cosmetics, personal care products, dental floss, feminine hygiene products, pet food packaging, products for infants and children, intimacy products
 - By January 2029: fabric treatments, ski wax, textiles, textile furnishings, upholstered furniture, paint
- Requires disclosure and registration with MDE and penalties for non-compliance.
- Establishes a fund for efforts to assess, prevent and remediate contamination from PFAS across Maryland's watersheds, communities and ecosystems.

It's urgent that Maryland continue its progress in protecting public health by stopping PFAS at their source. In addition to preventing direct PFAS exposure from everyday products, this bill would help reduce the amount of PFAS contaminated waste from entering the waste stream and contaminating effluent and sewage sludge from wastewater treatment plants. Waterkeepers Chesapeake and the below signed organizations urge this committee to issue a FAVORABLE report on SB 686.

Respectfully,
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Theaux LeGardeur, Executive Director & Riverkeeper
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