



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

Senate Bill SB0719 Sewage sludge - Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substance Regulation

**Senate Education, Energy, & the Environment Committee - 24 February 2026
SUPPORT**

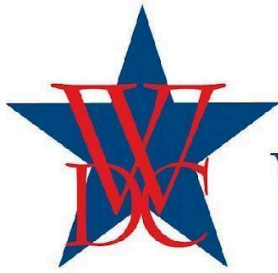
Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2026 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of SB0719. This bill will reduce the exposure of people in Maryland to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in air, soil, water, and food. Expensive technology can remove PFAS from drinking water, but there are few viable options for addressing contamination in agricultural land and the wider environment. PFASs are persistent, bioavailable, and bioaccumulative. They can move through the soil, water, and air to contaminate a larger environment; sources of drinking water, crops, and livestock are great concerns. Until PFAS is eliminated from sewage, it is essential to restrict the use of sewage sludge as a soil amendment.

While no Marylanders should suffer unnecessary exposure to PFAS, limiting exposure to PFAS is particularly important to women and children. Women spend most of their lives in a specially vulnerable group—prenatal, infancy, childhood, adolescence, childbearing, and elderly. Exposures to children can have immediate effects as well as impact their health decades later.

There are many long-term, life-altering, and expensive effects associated with PFAS exposure. Here are a few of the major categories of impacts:

- **Immune Function.** In 2016, the National Toxicology Program, a federal interagency program that evaluates and identifies the health effects of select substances, determined that PFOA and PFOS are hazardous to the immune system. Adult PFAS exposure has been associated with decreases in antibody production. Exposed children respond poorly to vaccines.
- **Cancer.** PFOA is associated with an increased risk for testicular, ovarian, breast, and kidney cancer. Among men with a first-degree relative with prostate cancer, PFOA and PFOS are associated with increased risk for prostate cancer.
- **Child Development.** Human epidemiology studies show associations between PFAS and developmental effects. One study showed that PFAS exposure during pregnancy was associated with decreased birth weight and head circumference in males. A recent study of mothers and their babies showed prenatal exposure to PFOS is associated with cognitive effects and decreased ability to regulate behavior in school-age children.



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- **Endocrine Disruption and Fertility**. Our endocrine system controls our basic physiology, including metabolism, growth, fertility, and development. PFAS may interfere with healthy hormonal function in the body. Early-life exposure to PFAS may contribute to the development of metabolic diseases, including obesity and type 2 diabetes. Studies of pregnant women show that those with higher prenatal PFAS levels had children with higher body fat cells at age eight. A special concern is that PFAS alters thyroid hormone function that regulates metabolism and growth. Some PFAS decrease fertility, and affect the ability to nurse. Animal studies support these conclusions.
- **Cardiovascular Disease**. A National Academy of Science Report states that PFAS exposure is associated with an increased risk of dyslipidemia, a condition of high LDL (bad) cholesterol, high triglycerides, or low HDL (good) cholesterol; thus contributing to build up of plaque in the arteries and heart disease.

Human exposure to PFAS is linked to life-altering and life-shortening health impacts. We must limit exposure to PFAS. **We strongly urge your support for SB0719 and a favorable Committee report.**

Cynthia Rubenstein
WDC President

Elisabeth Liisi Fidler
WDC Subcommittee on
Environment and Energy

Kate Stein
WDC Advocacy Chair