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ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sponsor Statement

HB 171—PFAS Use & Remediation; Fire/Water Safety Version A

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of chemicals harmful to human health. They are linked to serious health conditions including low birth weight, thyroid disease, and cancer. Low levels of exposure are common because PFAS can be found in products from non-stick cookware to waterproof jackets. But large-scale exposures happen where certain firefighting foams or other compounds containing PFAS seep into drinking water and linger for years.

Alaska's Department of Environmental Conservation declared PFAS hazardous substances several years ago.

House Bill 171:

- sets health-protective limits on the amount of PFAS in drinking water
- guarantees Alaskans in areas with high levels of PFAS contamination get clean drinking water and their blood levels checked
- bans PFAS foams in October of 2021, which is when the Federal Aviation Administration will stop requiring airports to use them
- prohibits thermal remediation (i.e., burning) of PFAS contamination unless a facility obtains a permit from the Department of Environmental Conservation that ensures the process will not result in the release of more than a minimal amount of an airborne compound with a carbon-fluorine bond.

The bill carves out an exemption for those producing, transporting, or refining oil and gas until the State Fire Marshal determines effective alternatives exist for the intensity of the fire threats oil & gas operations face.