

To: Alaska House Resources Committee

Re: HB171, "An Act relating to pollutants; relating to perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances; relating to the duties of the Department of Environmental Conservation; relating to firefighting substances; relating to thermal remediation of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substance contamination; and providing for an effective date."

The Alaska Public Interest Research Group (AKPIRG) is writing in support of House Bill 171 (HB171). Founded in 1974, AKPIRG is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, statewide organization advocating on behalf of consumers and the public interest.

AKPIRG has been a strong supporter of toxic-free communities, putting out an annual [Trouble in Toyland](#) report, aiding with PFAS research through reports like [Mind the Store](#), and working at the local level to ban flame-retardant chemicals from creating severe harm to children, firefighters, and other community members.

Currently, PFAS are used to make consumer products stain, grease and water resistant, including items like food packaging, carpet, upholstery, outdoor apparel, and in cookware, for stick resistance. In addition to consumer products, PFAS are used in industrial applications and firefighting foams for Class B petroleum and chemical fires.

In Alaska, the dispersive use of AFFF (aqueous film forming foam) containing PFAS on military bases and airports has contaminated the drinking water of many Alaskans. At least 10 communities throughout Alaska have levels of PFAS in their drinking water that are deemed unsafe by the EPA.

PFAS are highly toxic at exceedingly low levels of exposure. Exposure to PFAS has been associated with adverse health outcomes, including: cancers (such as kidney and testicular cancers); liver damage; increased risk of thyroid disease; harm to the immune system and decreased antibody response to vaccines; increased risk of asthma; decreased fertility; decreased birth weight; pregnancy-induced hypertension/ pre-eclampsia; and increased cholesterol.

There are safe alternatives that are effective and prevent harm to the health of firefighters and communities.

Consumers deserve access to safe products, and non-toxic drinking water. There are numerous definitive studies examining the effects of PFAS--now, it is the responsibility of policy makers to act on that information. HB171 will provide clear and necessary water standards for the entire class of PFAS chemicals and eliminate consumer products that are continuing to poison our communities. This bill is clearly a benefit to consumers, and it has our full support.

Sincerely,



Veri di Suvero
AKPIRG
Executive Director