

HB 171

Testimony Packet

House Resources Committee

Please, protect the citizens of Alaska by insuring that our waters and lands are protected from contamination from PFAS and other toxic substances. There are alternative strategies and substances that do not contaminate our drinking water and endanger our health.

Thank you,

Elayne Hunter

1640 Crescent Dr.

Anchorage

To the Chair, Rep Patkotak, and the Committee Members:

Knowing that fresh, clean water is rare and precious, I am writing to support HB 171. Yes, Alaska needs stronger limits to keep drinking water safe.

Please act now to prohibit the use of PFAS, to provide water where wells are contaminated, and to offer tests. People who have used contaminated water and those who have responded to an emergency and been exposed to perfluoroalkyl or polyfuoroalkyl need to be helped.

Thank you.

Anne Fuller

7943 N Douglas Hwy, Juneau 99801

Dear Committee Members -

Too Alaskans are already dealing with PFAS contamination of their drinking water and the death of their Alaskan dreams of self-reliance, independence, and living off the land.

Now is the time to move HB 171 out of committee so it has a hope of passing during this legislation session -- before thousands more Alaskans are affected by PFAS contaminated water.

Please vote to pass HB 171 tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Patti J Saunders

3733 Henderson Loop

Anchorage, AK 99507

Dear Representatives,

Alaskans need clean water. Please move HB 171 out of the House so Alaskans can focus on more than just the amount of PFAS in our water.

Sincerely,

Melissa

I am reaching out to urge you to pass Bill 171. Contaminants are rising in many forms and from many sources and the high north people deserve some protection from transboundary contaminants as well as local contaminants.

Let's see this process get underway with a serious start by passing all measures of Bill 171. Our subsistence food sources should be special for being pristine not contaminated.

KK Davis

Dear Chair Patkotak, Vice Chair Hopkins, and Members of the House Resources Committee:

Thank you for scheduling a hearing on HB 171 today. We hope that the information we provide here will be useful to the Committee. I have attached a short briefing paper, The Cost of Inaction and the Benefits of Acting Now on PFAS. The paper also summarizes the latest scientific information concerning health effects of PFAS.

Health impacts associated with PFAS—the science is definitive:

PFAS are persistent in the environment, are highly mobile and bioaccumulate in humans. Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) have no known degradation pathways in the environment meaning that they stay in surface water, groundwater, wildlife, and people and are passed down through generations from mother to child through umbilical cord blood and breastfeeding. A recent scientific study reported toxic PFAS chemicals in breast milk from 50 Seattle area mothers. While none of the study participants lived in a known hotspot, 100% of the milk samples contained PFAS—which are known to impact the thyroid, immune system, reproductive system and are linked to several types of cancer.

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicate that PFAS have been linked to:

- Pregnancy-induced hypertension/ pre-eclampsia
- Liver damage
- Increased cholesterol
- Increased risk of thyroid disease
- Decreased antibody response to vaccines

- Increased risk of asthma
- Decreased fertility
- Decreased birth weight

We have also summarized the scientific evidence concerning the effects of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances on human health in the attached 2-page briefing paper. I've attached our article that was very recently published in the peer-reviewed scientific journal Environmental Pollution. Our study found high levels of PFAS at the source of contamination and in drinking water. fourteen distinct PFAS in Gustavus water samples and seventeen different PFAS in serum. Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS) were the most abundant PFAS in both water and serum samples. We also found that contaminated drinking water from private wells contributes to the overall PFAS body burden in Gustavus residents.

Urgent need for state action on PFAS:

State legislatures are taking action to regulate PFAS because movement at the federal level is too slow. States have been leading the way on this effort for the last five years and momentum is only growing. Although the US EPA developed a strategic roadmap for PFAS, it falls far short of identifying the actions needed to truly solve the PFAS crisis. The plan makes commitments for adding only the two most well-known PFAS (PFOA and PFOS), which are no longer in use, to the nation's list of Superfund chemicals, and lays out protracted timelines to set enforceable drinking water limits for only these same two PFAS that are years out. The EPA may issue new health guidance levels for PFOA and PFOS, however these are not enforceable drinking water standards and they do not address other PFAS.

To date, 21 states have adopted 79 policies on PFAS; and 31 states are currently considering 202 policies. Here is a link to the Safer States data base of state policies on PFAS: <https://www.saferstates.com/toxic-chemicals/pfas/> These policies include: establishment of health protective, enforceable drinking water standards; elimination of PFAS in products such as firefighting foam, food packaging, carpeting, children's products, and cosmetics; and bans on incineration of PFAS wastes. Many of them address PFAS as a class. For example, in a nationally precedent-setting policy enacted in July 2021, Maine lawmakers established a mandate to eliminate all but the "essential" uses of PFAS in products.

We request that you pass HB 171 out of the House Resources Committee today. We would also appreciate your leadership in ensuring passage of HB 171 by the full legislature during this session. It is a vital step toward protecting drinking water and health of Alaskans from hazardous PFAS chemicals. Please include this message and attachment in the public record for the hearing. Thank you for your consideration and urgent attention to this bill.

Sincerely,

Pamela Miller, Senior Scientist and Executive Director, Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Pamela Miller, she/her/hers

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Please donate to support environmental health and justice. Join in support of our work!

We believe that everyone has the right to clean air, clean water, and toxic-free food.

We acknowledge that our offices are located on the ancestral and unceded traditional territories of the Dena'ina Peoples. The Indigenous peoples of this land never surrendered lands or resources to Russia or the United States.

Dear Chairman Patkotak,

Please vote to move HB 171 out of House Resource Committee. Limiting the amount of PFAS in drinking water protects Alaskan's health and prevents future pollution by replacing the use of PFAS-based firefighting foams in favor of safer alternatives.

Thank you,

Joan McBeen

PO Box 23

Tenakee Springs, AK 99841

Please support HB 171. This bill is so important to protect people in our state who have been affected by PFAS chemicals. Also to help future people whose lives will be affected, by no fault of their own from these toxic chemicals. It is time to hold the manufacturers of these chemicals accountable for the damage they have

caused to our land and people.

Thank you,

Debbie Hemenway

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17 Fara Way

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