



March 21, 2023

To: Members of Minnesota House of Representatives Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee
Chair Rick Hansen

Re: Please Support HF 1283, a PFAS rulemaking bill, to protect Minnesotans' health

Dear Chair Hansen and Committee members,

On behalf of the member organizations of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership, I urge the Committee to support House File 1283.

MEP recognizes that the per- and poly-fluoroalkyl (PFAS) class of chemicals pose a direct environmental and public health threat on a global level. We believe that change in how we interact with these chemicals can, and should, start in Minnesota.

PFAS enters Minnesota waters in a variety of ways, such as landfill leaching, direct dumping, and incineration. PFAS chemicals have been found in all human blood samples tested, arctic ice, whale blubber, rain, breast milk, and even umbilical cord blood. These toxic chemicals bioaccumulate and have the ability to alter DNA, causing cancer and other dangerous health impacts such as, but not limited to:

Children

- Immune System - reduced immune response, vaccine resistance
- Metabolic - low birth weight, childhood obesity, Type 2 diabetes

Adults

- Immune System - reduced immune response, vaccine resistance
- Digestive System - ulcerative colitis
- Thyroid - thyroid disease
- Cardiovascular - high cholesterol
- Kidneys - kidney disease
- Reproductive System - Men: testicular cancer; Women: pre-eclampsia, increased fertility, gestational diabetes

As the EPA suggests further lowering the drinking water standard for PFAS, many scientists have announced that their research shows no level is safe for humans to consume because of the ability of these chemicals to bioaccumulate. Minnesotans living in environmental justice communities, where pollution tends to be concentrated and testing and treatment options are limited, are especially at risk.

These chemicals are the most stable in organic chemistry, meaning that they are very difficult to destroy and they do not naturally break down, which is why they are known as “forever chemicals.”

Continuing to ignore the crisis the PFAS class of chemicals has created for Minnesota will only cause more damage. Not only will Minnesotans bear the burden of increased healthcare costs associated with PFAS related illnesses, but our business economy will suffer as well.

As other states, the European Union, and countries begin the process of banning PFAS, if we fail to act, we run the risk of becoming uncompetitive in the marketplace with no one to sell goods and products to. We also run the risk of becoming a dumping ground when other states and countries that can no longer sell toxic products, flood the American markets, increasing our healthcare and cleanup costs.


Currently, the cost of cleaning up current contamination is estimated to be in the billions of dollars. We must act now to stop the flow of new PFAS into the environment. This is quickly becoming a never-ending cycle of spending that Minnesota can't afford.

By giving the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency authority to establish water quality standards and setting the limit for perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), Minnesota is taking a strong step towards addressing the negative impact these toxic chemicals have on our environment and human health.

This bill not only helps assure Minnesotans that the water they drink and use to cook and play is healthy and safe, it also helps by preventing additional contamination, thereby limiting future cleanup costs.

We urge your support of HF 1283. Thank you for your attention to these concerns.

Sincerely,
Steve Morse
Executive Director

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Submitted on behalf of the organizations listed on the following page.

A.C.E.S. (Austin Coalition for Environmental Sustainability)

Clean River Partners

Clean Water Action Minnesota

Climate Land Leaders

CURE (Clean Up the River Environment)

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Land Stewardship Project

League of Women Voters Upper Mississippi River Region*

Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

Minnesota Well Owners Organization

Renewing the Countryside

Resilient Cities and Communities

Roots Return Heritage Farm*

Saint Paul Audubon Society

Vote Climate

Wild Rivers Conservancy

**denotes non-MEP member organization*