

SUPPORT HB 586

PFOA, PFOS, and PFAS; substances in public drinking water.

Representative Guzman

Reasons to support House Bill 586

1. Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are man-made chemicals that persist in the environment and human body. It is estimated that more than 90% of people in the United States have one or more specific PFAS in their blood.
2. PFAS have been used in items such as shampoo, paint, food packaging, firefighting foam and non-stick pans.
3. Human exposure to PFAS is a growing public health concern nationwide, and studies suggest that exposure may adversely affect fertility, cholesterol levels, and the risk of some forms of cancer.
4. The use of PFAS in firefighting foam is prevalent at Department of Defense installations. Five installations in Virginia have reported PFAS detections in their groundwater.
5. Virginia needs baseline data on the occurrence of PFAS in drinking water to understand the transport and fate of these compounds. This information will inform how we treat, manage, and regulate PFAS.
6. Gathering baseline data will take time and resources. This bill gives the Virginia Department of Health the opportunity to develop an appropriate framework for coordinating with and sampling a representative number of waterworks over a period of time.
7. The study will include a detailed sampling and analysis plan representative of the Commonwealth, the people served, and the variety of water sources available to produce scientifically defensible conclusions on recommended PFAS maximum contaminant levels.

Overview

HB 586 directs the Commissioner of Health to convene a work group to study the occurrence of certain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the Commonwealth's public drinking water and to develop recommendations for specific maximum contaminant levels for PFAS for inclusion in regulations of the Board of Health applicable to waterworks.



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