

SUPPORT HB 33

Topic: Water- Plastics

Bill Patron: Delegate Clark

Overview:

Establishes a work group to study the occurrence of microplastics in the Commonwealth's public drinking water; report. Directs the Commissioner of Health to convene a work group to study the occurrence of microplastics in the Commonwealth's public drinking water.

Reasons to support:

- Plastic pollution is a threat to our wildlife, environment and public health. As plastic breaks down over thousands of years, it does not go away but rather becomes microplastics.
- Microplastics are small plastic particles less than five millimeters in size. They include microbeads, pellets, or small fragments from larger plastic items breaking up in the marine environment.
- As plastic production has increased significantly in the past decade, microplastics are being found in our blood, lungs and in the unexplored depths of our oceans with little still known about the consequences.
- It is estimated that humans consume about a credit card worth of plastic every week yet source and health implication information is limited.
- The Virginia Marine Debris Reduction Plan (VMDRP) identifies four goals to address plastic pollution. One goal is increased understanding and prevention of microplastic and microfibers as marine debris.
- The VMDRP and much of the implementation of the plan is supported by the VA Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM is embedded within DEQ).
- This bill complements the VMDRP goals. A study on how much microplastic is in Virginia's drinking water will help Virginia determine the best course of action to mitigate the environmental and public health impacts of regular plastic consumption.



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