

SUPPORT SB 386

Topic: Prohibition on land applications of biosolids with any trace of PFAS

Bill Patron: Sen. Richard Stuart

OVERVIEW:

This bill prohibits the land application of sewage sludge or “biosolids” that contain any trace of PFAS; and requires haulers and applicators of biosolids to provide written statements to farmer/landowners affirming that the biosolids are free of PFAS before land applications. Imposes a \$5,000 civil penalty for each violation.

REASONS TO SUPPORT:

- Virginia does not currently require testing, disclosure, or limits on PFAS in sewage sludge, the residual solid waste of wastewater treatment that includes the material marketed as “biosolids” to farmers. As a result, farmers and landowners who participate in the practice are unaware of the presence and human health risk of PFAS in biosolids.
- Research demonstrates that PFAS in land applied biosolids can contaminate soil, crops, ground- and surface water resources. Indeed, EPA’s own modeling found that as little as one application of biosolids containing 1,000 ppt PFOS or PFOA could result in unacceptable risk to the health of farming families and households relying on well water near where biosolids are applied.
- Virginia Code requires that the state regulate the practice of land applications in a manner that prevents harm to human health, the environment, and state waters.
- In response to the risks posed to human health and environment, states like Maine and Connecticut have prohibited applications of PFAS-contaminated biosolids, while a growing number of other states are additionally restricting the use of PFAS-contaminated biosolids with moratoria and numeric limits, among other measures.



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This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)’s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia’s conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth’s natural resources today and for tomorrow.