

September 6, 2018

The Honorable John Shimkus, Chairman
The Honorable Paul Tonko, Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Environment
U.S. House of Representatives

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Dear Chairman Shimkus and Ranking Member Tonko,

Thank you for scheduling your hearing today entitled “Perfluorinated Chemicals in the Environment: An Update on the Response to Contamination and Challenges Presented.”

We send this letter to provide you with a sense of the devastating impacts communities have suffered as a consequence of the federal government’s failure to protect public health and our environment from Per- and Poly-fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) contamination, and to provide our recommendations for improving the response to this national disaster.

Communities lack a legal framework to compel polluters to analyze and prevent exposures and initiate remedial actions – often leaving victims to pay for their own solutions. Active steps and policies to prevent further harm and protect the environmental and public health of our country include the following:

Regulation of PFAS as a CLASS of compounds. The proposed approach to address PFAS as a mixture is not unusual and is similar to how other groups such as dinitrotoluenes, dioxins, PAHs and PCBs have been assessed and regulated. This approach is consistent with environmental field data which consistently finds PFAS as a mixture of widely varying relative ratios and combinations.

A national, enforceable drinking water standard (MCL) for the summed-total concentration of PFAS will not exceed **1 ppt** to assure that highly vulnerable populations, particularly expectant mothers and infants, are protective.

When off-site contamination is discovered or suspected, the military and all responsible parties **will no longer be shielded** from disclosing PFAS content.

In addition to drinking water, enforceable standards should be adopted to protect **water resources and systems** (groundwater, surface waters, aquatic ecosystems), **air quality**, and **soil** (food crops, irrigated crops, terrestrial ecosystems).

Affected communities will be empowered and engaged by designating a percentage of federal funding for communities to hire INDEPENDENT scientific, technical and health consultants.

Uniform public notification and participation in the language of affected populations including American Sign Language.

The identification of populations who may be unknowingly exposed to PFAS will be prioritized by identifying latent PFAS contamination sites, testing all public water supplies for PFAS, assessing potential PFAS contamination sources including military bases, munitions dumps, landfills, fire stations, fire training sites, and manufacturing sites.

Responsible parties will be required to end all PFAS discharges and be required to fund (and/or reimburse communities) for PFAS testing, remediation measures, health assessments, medical monitoring, and toxicity & health studies.

PFAS cleanup methods and remedies will be fully protective of human and ecological health, prevent toxic emissions, be readily and effectively monitored, provide long term effectiveness and permanence, will not create more toxic by-products and PFAS wastes that do not already have an authorized treatment plan, and will be accepted by communities, tribes and indigenous peoples who are both directly and indirectly impacted.

Responsible parties will be accountable for life-time costs associated with selected remedies.

A publicly-available nationwide **PFAS data repository** will be established.

Thank you for bringing focus to these important issues by holding this hearing.

Sincerely,

Laura Olah, Executive Director
Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger (CSWAB.org)