



An Act to protect Massachusetts public health from PFAS, H4486 Sponsored by Senator Julian Cyr and Representative Kate Hogan

Problem: Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a class of over 12,000 chemicals used to make products stainproof, water resistant, and nonstick. PFAS are in a wide array of consumer products, including food packaging, carpets, clothing, cookware, pesticides, artificial turf, cleaners, waxes, building materials, paints, personal care products, firefighting gear and foam.

All PFAS have a fluorine atom bonded to a carbon. This is one of the strongest bonds in nature — and, as a result, PFAS chemicals are extraordinarily persistent. **They never fully break down**, remaining in the environment for thousands of years. PFAS are bio-accumulative, which means as we continue to make and use PFAS, they continue to build up in our bodies, wildlife and the environment.

Toxic at very low levels, these chemicals [increase risk](#) of cancers, immunosuppression, liver disease, endocrine disruption, developmental and reproductive harm, high cholesterol, asthma, and neurological problems.

People are exposed by drinking and eating food and water that has been contaminated, and using products with PFAS. PFAS in products escapes into air and dust, which we breathe. When products containing PFAS are manufactured and disposed of, PFAS leach into the soil, groundwater and drinking water. In Massachusetts, at least 171 public water systems in 96 cities and towns, and many private wells, have [exceeded the state's legal limit](#) (Maximum Contaminant Level) for PFAS. **New federal standards for PFAS in water will double the number of water systems that will be over the legal limit for PFAS.**

The bill is cosponsored by a bipartisan [majority of lawmakers](#) from the House and Senate.

Solution: This bill contains recommendations outlined in the [PFAS Interagency Task Force Report](#):

- Regulates PFAS as a class of chemicals, defined as “**fluorinated organic chemicals containing at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom**,” preventing substitutions that pose similar health risks.
- Bans intentionally added PFAS in food packaging, children’s products, car seats, personal care products, cookware, fabric treatments, carpets and rugs, upholstered furniture, and firefighters’ personal protective equipment;
- Creates a PFAS Remediation Trust Fund to help communities test and treat for PFAS in soil, drinking water and groundwater. Funds shall be available to test and treat drinking water in both private wells and public drinking water system;
- Gives the Department of Public Health (DPH) the authority to temporarily exempt products from the PFAS ban if it determines PFAS use in the product is essential for health safety or functioning of society, and PFAS alternatives are not reasonably available;
- Gives DPH the authority to restrict additional products;
- Requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to limit industry discharges of PFAS to groundwater and surface water;
- Requires DEP to phase out the application of PFAS-containing sludge on farms and landfills;
- Requires state to study impact of PFAS on state’s agricultural products and air emissions.
- Bans the use of PFAS-containing firefighting foam for testing or training purposes. Requires reporting within 48 hours if foam is used, spilled, or otherwise released.

Many states are acting to restrict use of PFAS – Maine and Minnesota have passed laws to **phase out all PFAS**.

26 states have banned the sale of PFAS containing firefighting foam

12 states have banned the sale of food packaging containing PFAS

7 states have banned the sale of personal care products, carpets, rugs, fabric treatment containing PFAS

5 states have banned the sale of PFAs in apparel or textiles

4 states have banned the sale of PFAS in children’s products

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