



March 28, 2022

Written testimony for [HB275](#) / [SB273](#) - Environment – PFAS Chemicals – Prohibitions and Requirements (George “Walter” Taylor Act)

Position: Favorable

Submitted by: Denisse Guitarra, Maryland Conservation Advocate, Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS)

Dear House Health and Government Operations Committee,

For 125 years, Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS) has inspired people to enjoy, learn about and protect nature. We thank the House Health and Government Operations Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony for HB275 - Environment – PFAS Chemicals – Prohibitions and Requirements (George “Walter” Taylor Act). **ANS supports HB275 / SB273.**

As we navigate today’s public health, social, and economic crises, it is critical to support the passage of HB275. This bill prohibits the manufacture, sale, use, distribution, and disposal of certain products – firefighting foams, food packaging and new rugs and carpets - containing PFAS chemicals. The bill also requires notification of PFAS in firefighting gear and prohibits the disposal of PFAS chemicals in landfills or by incineration.

As defined in the bill, PFAS chemicals are fluorinated organic chemicals containing at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom, including perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances. These human-made chemicals are used in a variety of products, including non-stick pots and pans, rugs and carpets, food packaging, firefighting foam, and making products grease-proof or water-resistant.

PFAS do not break down in human bodies or in the environment. Rather, these “forever chemicals” continue to threaten environmental and human health as they pollute waterways and drinking water. PFAS have also been linked to cancer and other adverse human health effects. Maryland PIRG notes that the MDE has found PFAS in 75% of the drinking water that the agency has tested. PFAS contamination also has been detected in and around various military sites and in seafood.¹

The passage of this bill would provide a necessary step forward for Maryland in mitigating the environmental and public health risk presented by the continuing manufacture, sale, and use of PFAS chemicals. ANS and our 28,000 members and supporters recommend that the House Health and Government Operations Committee support the passage of **HB275 / SB273.**

Sincerely,

Anne Cottingham

Conservation Volunteer, Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS)

Denisse Guitarra

Maryland Conservation Advocate, Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS)

¹ Maryland PIRG. 2021. The threat of “Forever Chemicals” Available at: <https://marylandpirgfoundation.org/reports/mdp/threat-forever-chemicals>

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