

November 20, 2020

Senator Richard Shelby
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Nita M. Lowey
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Granger and Vice Chairman Leahy,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters nationwide, we strongly encourage you to build on the progress made in last year's appropriations bills by continuing to make addressing toxic per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) a priority in this year's Fiscal Year 2021 (FY 21) full year appropriations bill.

PFAS – often referred to as “forever chemicals” – could contaminate the drinking water of more than 200 million Americans.¹ To date, there are more than 700 active or closed military installations with known or suspected PFAS contamination.²

We were glad to see appropriations bills in both the House and Senate include numerous PFAS provisions intended to support the federal government's scientific, regulatory and cleanup work, and we strongly encourage a final funding package to meet or exceed the spending levels in the House's FY21 bills.

In particular, we urge you to include the following PFAS provisions:

Defense Appropriations Bill

- \$83.1 million across Defense Department accounts to cleanup of PFAS contamination at active military installations, including National Guard facilities.
 - \$11 million for the Navy Base Operations Support
 - \$8 million for the Army Base Operations Support
 - \$47.6 million for Army National Guard Base Operations Support
 - \$16.5 million for Air National Guard Base Operations Support
- \$15 million for the continuation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's study on health exposure of defense communities affected by PFAS.

¹ <https://www.ewg.org/release/study-more-200-million-americans-could-have-toxic-pfas-their-drinking-water>

² <https://www.ewg.org/release/update-toxic-forever-chemicals-likely-contaminate-more-700-military-sites>

- \$2.5 million for the Navy to develop a new military specification for fluorine free aqueous film forming foam (AFFF).
- \$5 million for a AFFF innovation prize to incentive new research to meet the requirement of fielding a PFAS-free AFFF alternative by 2024.
- \$50 million in research and development funding for both for the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP) and the Environmental Security Technology Certification Program (ESTCP) to develop and field-test PFAS remediation, treatment and disposal technologies.
- A requirement that the Pentagon report to Congress on its program to test the blood of military firefighters for PFAS as part of their annual physical, set to begin in October.
- A requirement that the Pentagon publicly release the levels of PFAS contamination found at each installation.
- A requirement that the Pentagon report to Congress on the expected and actual costs associated with investigating and cleaning up PFAS at active military sites.

Military Construction/Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill

- At least \$200 million within the Base Realignment and Closure Account to increase the pace of cleanup at former military installations affected by PFAS.
- A requirement that the Pentagon regularly report to Congress on the progress being made identifying and remediating PFOS/PFOA at closed military installations, including estimating current and future costs and timelines for remediation.
- A requirement that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) continue collaborating with the Defense Department's PFAS Task Force, academia, and other health institutions to monitor the health effects from PFAS.
- A provision encouraging the VA to establish and maintain a registry for veterans who may have been exposed to PFAS due to exposure to AFFF during their military service.

Interior and Environment Appropriations Bill

- At least \$14.9 million in additional funding for the Environmental Protection Agency's scientific and regulatory work on PFAS, including:
 - \$2.5 million to support EPA's regulatory work needed to designate PFAS chemicals as hazardous substances under the Superfund law.
 - \$2.4 million for the development of wastewater standards, also known as Effluent Limitation Guidelines, for PFAS chemicals.
 - \$1.5 million for setting Maximum Contaminant Levels for PFAS in drinking water.
 - \$1.4 million to support the reporting of PFAS releases into the air and water under the Toxic Release Inventory, as required by the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).
 - \$3.5 million to help support research needs on PFAS.
 - \$2 million to study the relationship between PFAS exposure and susceptibility to COVID-19.
 - \$1.2 million to support U.S. Geologic Survey's work to monitor waterways for PFAS, as required by the 2020 NDAA.

- \$15 million for the multipurpose grant program included in the FY 20 appropriations bill, requiring that funds be used for assisting states with their regulatory, cleanup and remediation responses to PFAS contamination.

Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill

- A provision directing the FDA to review any new scientific information pertaining to PFAS chemicals and determine whether PFAS chemicals currently allowed for use as a food contact substance in food packaging continue to meet the safety standard of a reasonable certainty of no harm under the intended conditions of use.

As you work to finalize the FY21 full year appropriations bills, we urge you to build upon the progress you made last year by ensuring that our federal agencies have additional resources available to tackle the growing PFAS contamination crisis.

Respectfully submitted,

AAUW - Louisville, Kentucky Branch
ABLE-differently
Advance Carolina
Alabama Rivers Alliance
Alaska Community Action on Toxics
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
Atlantic Coast Conference Climate Justice Coalition
Aytzim: Ecological Judaism
Catholic Divestment Network
Center for Environmental Health
Center for Public Environmental Oversight
Charleston Audubon and Natural History Society
Citizens Campaign for the Environment
Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger
Clean and Healthy New York
Clean Cape Fear
Clean Water Action
Climate Justice at Boston College
Community Action Works Campaigns
Connecticut Citizen Action Group
Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Earthjustice
Ecology Center
Endangered Species Coalition
Environment America
Environmental Advocates NY
Environmental Justice Task Force-Tucson
Environmental Working Group
Fight For Zero, Inc

Floyds Fork Environmental Association
Green Science Policy Institute
GreenCAPE
GreenLatinos
Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition
Hudson River Sloop Clearwater
Idle No More, South Carolina Indian Affairs Commission
Kentucky Conservation Committee
Kentucky Environmental Foundation
Kentucky Resources Council
League of Conservation Voters
Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan
Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition
Merrimack Citizens for Clean Water
Military Poisons
National PFAS Contamination Coalition
Natural Resources Defense Council
Need Our Water (NOW)
Neighborhood Planning & Preservation
Newburgh Clean Water Project
Newburgh Conservation Advisory Council
Ohio River Foundation
Oregon Environmental Council
Outdoor Promise
PfoaProjectNY
Quassaick Creek Watershed Alliance
Rachel Carson Council
Safer Chemicals Healthy Families
Sierra Club
South Carolina Climate Change
South Carolina Environmental Law Project
South Carolina Native Plant Society
Southern Environmental Law Center
Tennessee Riverkeeper
The Field Fund
The Kentucky Green Report
Toxic Free North Carolina
Tucson City Council, Ward 6
Tucson Forward, Inc.
United Nations Association of the USA - Bluegrass Chapter
United Nations Association of the USA - Frankfort Chapter
United Nations Association of the USA - Louisville Chapter
UPSTREAM
U.S. PIRG
Utah Valley Earth Forum
Vermont Conservation Voters

Vermont Natural Resources Council
Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG)
Westfield Residents Advocating For Themselves (WRAFT)
Women Graduates-USA
Your Turnout Gear and PFOA
Zero Waste Washington