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Commission on the Environmental and Public Health Impacts of Perfluorinated Chemicals Releases First Interim Report

CONCORD, NH – Today, the Commission on the Environmental and Public Health Impacts of Perfluorinated Chemicals released its first Interim Report, sharing its initial assessments on the environmental and health impacts of PFAS with the Governor, Senate, House of Representatives, relevant agencies and associations, and the general public.

“The Commission is collaborating with various agencies and lawmakers to protect New Hampshire, its residents and environment, from the detrimental impact of PFAS chemicals, all while balancing short and long-term consequences,” reported **Senator Jeanne Dietsch**, who also Chairs the Commission. “This Interim Report provides a summary of the work we’ve already done and it’s the blueprint for the work we still need to do.”

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On Background:

The report includes the following recommendations, listed by suggested House subcommittee:

Resources

- Expand 2019 HB737 Statutory Commission membership to include 1 elected and 1 community member from Londonderry.

Judicial/Legal

- Extend the statute of limitations on chemical and PFAS-related injury.

Environmental

- Resubmit (2020 HB1569) which would maintain a public registry of where certain fire suppressants have been used.
- Establish a policy related to the identification of any PFAS chemicals that pose a concern to public health and/or the environment. This policy must also cover the regulation and establishment of MCLs for each newly identified PFAS chemical.
- Resubmit (2020 HB1446) to establish a committee to study the labelling of products containing PFAS.

Health

- Institute educational standards and practices related to health implications of PFAS chemicals for all healthcare personnel.

- Use public data systems to manage and monitor information regarding certain outcomes in the areas impacted by PFAS air emissions and drinking water contamination.
- All bottled water be subject to the newly established MCLsHea.
- Require any source company responsible for water and soil contamination to be responsible for the costs of medical monitoring over a long-term basis for those exposed.
- All blood samples obtained by the MVD Community Exposure Assessment be maintained and that a PFAS blood test registry be established.
- Require that all new residents who have private wells within contamination zones receive disclosure of information related to water quality and standards including PFAS and other reportable contaminants.
- Require that physicians' medical screenings determine whether patients live or work inside areas of known PFAS contamination.
- Ensure continuing professional development and education concerning PFAS for healthcare professionals, as suggested by 2020 HB1538.

Future Legislation

- After the DES/USGS soil survey to be completed in early 2022- Study the ability to accurately test and designate standards for PFAS in foods and determine the appropriate state department that would be responsible for any resulting enforcement.

The full report will be located on the Commission's website at:

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/statstudcomm/committees/1495/>

The 18 members bring to the Commission a diverse set of views from academia, the private sector, community organizations, and government. Commission members have held full working group meetings and subcommittee meetings in the past year. They have reviewed reports, listened to testimony from NH residents, and received presentations on the status of PFAS remediation efforts in NH. As a result, the Interim Report offers timely recommendations to the government and other agencies tasked with protecting the public.

Established by law in 2019, the Commission investigates and analyzes the environmental and public health impacts relating to release of perfluorinated chemicals (PFAS) in the air, soil, and groundwater in Merrimack, Bedford, and Litchfield. The Commission began meeting in October 2019. Information pertaining to their work, including meeting minutes, documents, and agendas, is accessible through the following website:

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/statstudcomm/committees/1495/>

The Commission will continue to reach out to academia, relevant industries, non-profits, associations, and government to formulate recommendations for the final report.

A list of Commission members can be found here:

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/statstudcomm/details.aspx?id=1495&rbl=1&txtchapternumber=126-a:79-a>

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