



February 24, 2022

Chair Hansen & Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Representative Kotyza-Witthuhn's HF 3571 (PFAS prohibited in juvenile products) and Representative Jordan's HF 3180 (PFAS prohibited in home and commercial furnishings).

The Minnesota Retailers Association is made up of 1,200 retail stores across the state, including main street retailers, regional/mid-sized retailers, and retailers with a national presence. Today's retail market is competitive, and consumers are mobile with many options for purchasing products, including across the country and in some cases even the world.

Given how consumers buy and how the retail market works, we ask that as you look at regulating products you consider the following:

- **Products sold in Minnesota should not have a standard set only for Minnesota.** A Minnesota-only or outlying standard could result in the removal of products from our shelves if manufacturers are not inclined to make products just for Minnesota, or consumers may elect to purchase products outside the state.
- **Our state approach should be in concert with federal, industry, and other collaborative standards** as opposed to being out on our own.
- **Longer sell-through provisions** for retailers should be provided with a **deference to "manufactured-before" and "manufactured-after" dates.**
- Language should recognize that PFAS may exist in small amounts based on how a product is made. As an example, water used in manufacturing could contain trace amounts of PFAS that end up in a product. If prohibitions are passed, the **focus should be on "intentionally-added" PFAS and de-minimis levels should be allowed.**
- **PFAS definitions should be uniform and common.**

We know many retailers are taking steps and working with manufacturers and suppliers on goals to limit or phase out PFAS. Thank you for ensuring Minnesota is working collaboratively with others and recognizing we are a part of a larger marketplace.

Sincerely,

Bruce Nustad
president



February 24, 2022

Dear Chair Hansen, Vice Chair Wazlawik and the Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the North Star Chapter of Sierra Club in support of the following bills:

HF3180 PFAS prohibited in home and commercial furnishing

HF3571 PFAS prohibited in juvenile products

We like to feel that we are safe in our homes, but many people might be surprised by the number of products that expose them and their family to a toxic chemical. It seems a growing number of products are being treated with “forever chemicals” to make them stain-resistant and waterproof.

PFAS have useful properties, but they come with a steep price. PFAS are linked to serious health concerns and infants and children are especially vulnerable because of the dose they get for their size. They are also more at risk because they spend so much time on the floor. PFAS flakes off carpet and furniture creating toxic dust. Infants and children touch the carpet and breath in the dust. Everything on their hands eventually ends up in their mouths. They have multiple pathways for getting PFAS into their bodies. PFAS pose a risk for all of us but are especially risky during times of development.

PFAS are also a health risk for pregnant women and their babies. PFAS can pass through the placenta and have been found to alter both the mothers’ and babies’ thyroid hormones, which control brain development, growth, and metabolism. Studies have shown that women exposed to PFAS during pregnancy have higher risks for gestational diabetes and are more likely to have low birth weight babies.

PFAS are pervasive in our homes. One researcher tested his own home and found PFAS in every room of his house including the basement and garage. Another recent study found PFAS in measurable amounts in the air in homes, offices, and classrooms. When PFAS-treated products are washed, the PFAS burden in our wastewater system grows.

It seems the more testing that is done, the more products that are found to be treated with PFAS. A study testing mattress pads, comforters, tablecloths, and napkins found that 72% of those marketed as stain-resistant or waterproof contained PFAS. More disturbing, in addition to the new short-chain PFAS, they also found long-chain PFAS that was phased out for use in the US. Even though most of the products tested contained PFAS, other similar products, even from the same retailer, did not proving that alternatives are readily available.

Some retailers, including Lowe’s and Home Depot, have stopped selling PFAS-treated carpet and rugs. Lowe’s also switched to fabric protectors that are pfas-free. It is encouraging that some stores are beginning to remove PFAS-treated products but too many children’s products and home furnishings continue to contain PFAS, and customers are not able to avoid them because PFAS disclosure is not required on labels.



SIERRA CLUB
NORTH STAR CHAPTER

North Star Chapter
2300 Myrtle Ave, Suite 260
St Paul, MN 55114

PFAS are toxic and pose a risk to our health, especially children. They are frequently found in home furnishing and impossible for consumers to avoid. Alternatives to PFAS for stain and water resistance are available. I ask that you support these two bills to ban PFAS in home furnishing and juvenile products to protect our health and our environment.

Sincerely,

Lori Olinger
Chair, Zero Waste Task Force
Sierra Club North Star Chapter

[Toxic Convenience: the hidden costs of forever chemicals in stain- and water-resistant products](#)

[These Everyday Toxins May Be Hurting Pregnant Women and Their Babies](#)

[The Air That We Breathe: Neutral and Volatile PFAS in Indoor Air](#)

[I tested my tap water, household products and cat for toxic forever chemicals](#)

February 23, 2022

Representative Rick Hansen
Chair, House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee
407 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for Reducing Sources of PFAS (H.F. 3180, 3571)

Dear Chair Hansen,

The Partnership on Waste and Energy (Partnership) is a Joint Powers Board consisting of Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties, formed to address waste management and energy issues. The Partnership seeks to end waste, promote renewable energy and enhance the health and resiliency of communities we serve while advancing equity and responding to the challenges of a changing climate.

The Partnership supports measures to design waste, toxicity and pollution out of the marketplace in pursuit of a sustainable, circular economy. Focusing on upstream solutions is more efficient and effective than dealing with costs and impacts after products have been used and disposed.

The Partnership is very concerned about the persistent presence of PFAS in the state's land, water and other resources. We support initiatives to reduce sources of PFAS as a strategy to protect public health and minimize the potential for PFAS to appear in waste materials and facilities managing those materials. Efforts such as H.F. 3180 (Jordan) and H.F. 3571 (Kotyza-Witthuhn), similar to other bills recently passed out of your committee, encourage re-examination of product design. This can minimize the use of ingredients that create problems for consumers, local governments and waste system operators and leave legacy costs that taxpayers are often forced to manage.

The Partnership appreciates the priority legislators place on mitigating the environmental and economic challenges posed by a range of problematic ingredients, including PFAS, and look forward to solutions that reduce PFAS in our environment and protect public health.

Sincerely,



Commissioner Fran Miron, Washington County
Chair, Partnership on Waste and Energy

cc: Peter Strohmeier, Committee Administrator
Commissioner Debbie Goettel, Hennepin County
Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County
House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee members