



# Taking Action on PFAS

H.R. 535, 116<sup>th</sup> Congress

Environment & Climate Change Chairman Paul Tonko

*"Congress is taking necessary steps to deliver the drinking water standards and other PFAS protections the American people need and deserve."*

❖ Paul Tonko

## PFAS pollution is dangerous & hard to clean up

- **Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are everywhere**—air pollution, contaminants in our drinking water, consumer goods and packaging, firefighting foam, etc.
  - PFAS is a class of chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS and thousands of other variants
  - These synthetic 'forever' chemicals are **now present in the blood of 99% of Americans**
- Negative health effects of PFAS exposure start to occur at extremely small concentrations
  - Increases risks of various forms of cancer, kidney disease, thyroid dysfunction & other illness
- **Up to 110 Million Americans may have PFAS-contaminated drinking water**
  - **More than 1,500 drinking water systems** across the U.S. may be contaminated

## EPA released an action plan but won't act

- **The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has yet to move** forward on a maximum contaminant level (MCL), designation of PFAS as a hazardous substance or take other essential steps to protect communities
  - No comprehensive testing plan has been released even for communities with known PFAS contamination in their public water systems!
- **A real action plan** in response to this crisis needs to include common-sense steps:
  1. Reduce Americans' exposure to PFAS through our air, water and consumer goods
  2. Increase monitoring and testing of potentially affected systems & communities
  3. Expedite remediation and accountability when PFAS is released into the environment

## The Senate Needs Move Forward!

### H.R. 535, the PFAS Action Act

1. **Passed by the U.S. House of Representatives** on January 10, 2020, now awaits Senate action
2. **Stems the flow of PFAS into the environment** by requiring cleanup of sites contaminated with PFOA and PFOS, setting air emission limits for PFOA and PFOS, prohibiting unsafe incineration of PFAS, and limiting the introduction of new PFAS chemicals into commerce;
3. **Identifies health risks** by requiring comprehensive health testing for all PFAS, reporting of PFAS releases, and monitoring for PFAS in drinking water;
4. **Limits human exposure to PFAS** by requiring a drinking water standard that protects public health, including the health of vulnerable subpopulations including pregnant women, infants, and children, as well as other measures to hold polluters accountable;
5. **Provides grants to impacted water systems**, create a **voluntary label for cookware** that is PFAS free, and provide **guidance for first responders** to limit their exposures.

Connect with Representative Tonko on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @RepPaulTonko