



March 17, 2020

Senator Anthony J. Portantino
State Capitol, Room 3086
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Lena Gonzalez
State Capitol, Room 2068
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1056 – Methodologies to Measure Toxic PFAS Chemicals in Water – SUPPORT

Dear Senators Portantino and Gonzalez:

On behalf of the undersigned public health and environmental organizations, we write to support your legislation, Senate Bill 1056. This bill will require the State Water Resources Control Board to approve an analytical method for testing drinking water, groundwater, and surface water for the class of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (hereinafter referred to as PFAS), and to accredit qualified laboratories in California to test for PFAS pursuant to the approved method.

PFAS are a class, or group, of thousands of man-made chemicals used widely in industrial and consumer products, from cookware and water- or stain-resistant clothing to firefighting foam. They are often called “forever” chemicals because they do not readily break down in nature. Linked to a long list of health problems, among them cancer and developmental issues, PFAS can be harmful at extremely low doses. These chemicals are contaminating our air, soil, water, plants, wildlife – and even our own bodies. PFAS have been detected in the blood of nearly every American.

Most recent testing reveals that nearly 100 public water systems serving approximately 7.5 million Californians across the state have wells that are contaminated with PFAS. However, these sobering results are limited because *currently approved* testing methods only test for less than one percent of the PFAS chemicals that may be in our water. Therefore, California, along with the rest of the nation, does not understand the full scope of the problem and thus is limited in its ability to address the problem in an informed and comprehensive manner. The intent of SB 1056 is to provide a tool to state agencies and water suppliers to better understand the full extent of PFAS contamination in our water.

Fortunately, alternative methods do exist that will allow the state to estimate the full amount of PFAS in water. To ensure the integrity of these methods and use them to characterize the actual extent of this serious pollution problem, the efficacy and reliability of the methods must be verified by an authoritative body, most often the federal U.S. EPA.

Unfortunately, U.S. EPA is dragging its feet. The agency's Method 533 and Method 537.1 only enable us to reliably detect 29 PFAS. Because the federal government is moving so slowly in responding to the national need for testing and treatment tools, Californians continue to be exposed. Fortunately, the State Water Resources Control Board has the expertise and experience in approving testing methodologies for water contaminants and can move ahead in approving a methodology to measure total PFAS so that we can take the actions needed to protect the public in a sensible, cost effective manner. SB 1056 will provide the Board with the direction and resources necessary to take this important step.

California cannot wait while U.S. EPA delays in addressing the PFAS crisis. Consequently, we support the passage of SB 1056 and thank you for your leadership on this important public health and environmental issue.

Sincerely,



Andria Ventura
Toxics Program Manager
Clean Water Action



Bill Allayaud
California Director of Government Affairs
Environmental Working Group



Avinash Kar
Senior Attorney & Director, State Health Policy
Natural Resources Defense Council