

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 11, 2020

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior and Environment
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior and Environment
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

Thank you for your continued dedication to addressing the health and economic concerns pertaining to contamination from per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). As you work to finalize appropriations for the Department of the Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for fiscal year (FY) 2021, we encourage you to build upon the progress that was made in last year's appropriations bill by providing critical funding to expand PFAS monitoring, standards development and cleanup capabilities.

As you are aware, PFAS chemicals have emerged as widespread pollutants in the drinking water sources for communities across the country due to their use in a variety of residential, commercial and industrial products. The number of sites with known or suspected contamination from PFAS continues to rise. In March 2020, the Department of Defense reported that 651 sites may have been contaminated with these materials, a more than 50 percent increase from its last listing.¹ Moreover, recent reports have suggested at least 2,230 locations in 49 states are known to have PFAS contamination.²

PFAS materials have been associated with a number of adverse health effects, including birth defects, various forms of cancer and immune system dysfunction. While knowledge about the health impacts of PFAS is evolving, little is known about the long-term cumulative effects these unregulated contaminants may have on human health. To better understand the scope of the problem, it is critical that the EPA and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) have the resources necessary to fully implement the new reporting and monitoring requirements that Congress passed as part of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2020 (P.L.116-92).

Moreover, we must continue to address ongoing industrial releases of PFAS into the environment. Many industrial facilities across the nation have been known to discharge PFAS into the air and water in the process of manufacturing nonstick cookware, stain-resistant fabric,

¹ Department of Defense (2020, March). *PFAS Task Force Progress Report*. Retrieved from https://media.defense.gov/2020/Mar/13/2002264440/-1/-1/1/PFAS_Task_Force_Progress_Report_March_2020.pdf

² EWG. (2020, July). Interactive Map: PFAS Contamination Crisis: New Data Show 2,230 Sites in 49 States. Retrieved August 12, 2020, from https://www.ewg.org/interactive-maps/pfas_contamination/

firefighting foam and numerous other goods. For several communities, these discharges are the most significant source of PFAS pollution entering drinking water supplies.

Finally, it is critical that we begin to safely and expeditiously clean up PFAS contamination across the country, including in drinking water sources and industrial sites.

As you finalize FY 2021 appropriations, we strongly encourage you to provide dedicated resources to expand PFAS research, monitoring, standards development, and cleanup capabilities, including the following PFAS provisions:

- \$2.5 million to support EPA's regulatory work needed to designate PFAS chemicals as hazardous substances under the Superfund law.
- \$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 FY 2020 NDAA.
- \$2 million to study the relationship between PFAS exposure and susceptibility to COVID-19.
- \$15 million for the multipurpose grant program included in last year's appropriations bill, requiring that funds be used for assisting States establish their own pretreatment programs for curbing industrial discharges of PFAS.
- \$1 million to support USGS' work to monitor waterways for PFAS, as required by the FY 2020 NDAA.
- Language encouraging EPA to move forward with existing efforts to establish national water standards for PFOA and PFOS.

Again, thank you for your continued dedication to tackling the PFAS contamination crisis and for including critical funding to expand PFAS monitoring, standards development and cleanup capabilities in this year's FY 2021 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,



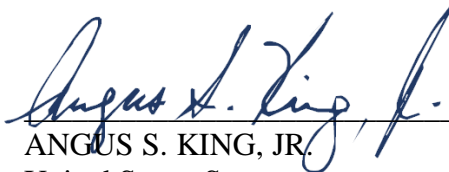
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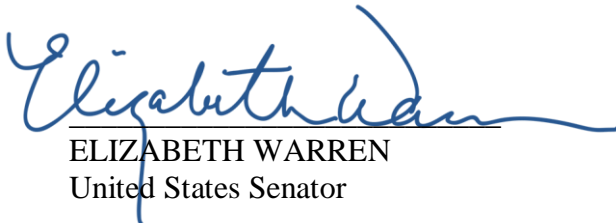
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