THE SENATE
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024
STATE OF HAWAII

S.C.R. NO. 128

MAR 0 8 2024

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO ESTABLISH A PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES TESTING GRANT PROGRAM IN COLLABORATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.

WHEREAS, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of synthetic organofluorine chemical compounds that have multiple fluorine atoms attached to an alkyl chain that are increasingly becoming understood to pose serious toxicity to humans and other organisms in the environment; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) identified at least 4,730 distinct PFAS chemicals; and

WHEREAS, the United States Environmental Protection Agency's toxicity database lists 14,735 unique PFAS, while PubChem lists more than 6,000,000 that fit under the 2021 revised definition of PFAS by the OECD; and

WHEREAS, PFAS include perfluorosulfonic acids, such as perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), and the perfluorocarboxylic acids like perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA); and

WHEREAS, many PFAS chemicals were used in the mid-20th century in products and on materials due to their enhanced water-resistant and oil-resistent properties, like Teflon or aqueous film forming foam, before the environmental impact and toxicity to human and mammalian life had been studied; and

WHEREAS, PFOS, PFOA, and other PFAS chemicals are commonly described as persistent organic pollutants or "forever chemicals" because they remain in the environment for long periods of time; and

WHEREAS, residues have been detected in humans and wildlife, prompting concern about impacts on health; and

S.C.R. NO. 128

WHEREAS, according to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, PFAS exposure is linked to an increased risk of dyslipidemia (abnormally high cholesterol), suboptimal antibody response, reduced infant and fetal growth, and higher rates of kidney cancer; and

WHEREAS, health concerns related to PFAS have resulted in numerous lawsuits, where PFAS producers such as 3M, Chemours, DuPont, and Corteva have reached billion-dollar agreements leading to the use of PFAS being regulated in several parts of the world, with some plans to phase them out entirely from products; and

WHEREAS, chemical corporations that produce PFAS generate approximately $4,000,000,000 in annual profits from the production of these chemicals in the United States, but they impose monumental costs on taxpayers and the health of the planet's human and animal populations; and

WHEREAS, of these costs, the most expensive are remediation efforts to fight PFAS soil and water contamination, followed by the healthcare costs to treat cancer, thyroid disease, kidney dysfunction, birth defects, and other major medical conditions that have been linked to even low levels of exposure to PFAS, and followed by the costs of monitoring of PFAS pollution in human and other life forms; and

WHEREAS, the International Chemical Secretariat has estimated that PFAS cost approximately $17,500,000,000,000 annually; and

WHEREAS, PFAS have been frequently documented in marine species that are commonly consumed by humans, posing potential health risks, and studies on the bioaccumulation in certain species are important to determine daily tolerable limits for human consumption, and where those limits may be exceeded causing potential health risks; and

WHEREAS, the State may face economic and food source consequences due to potential future advisories, fishing limits, or closures for certain species due to their PFAS content; and

S.C.R. NO. 128

WHEREAS, as of August 2023, twenty-five states have established enforceable drinking water standards related to PFAS, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency is conducting a study from 2023 to 2025 to collect data on PFAS and potentially develop additional regulations; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of Health is requested to establish a PFAS Testing Grant Program in collaboration with the University of Hawaii; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the PFAS Testing Grant Program is designed to provide funding to assist local communities, businesses, and residents throughout the State in obtaining testing services and biological sampling for PFAS detection; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health and University of Hawaii are requested to seek funding for the PFAS Testing Grant Program from the United States Congress, through communication with the Hawaii congressional delegation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the PFAS Testing Grant Program is requested to be developed based on criteria that reflect the best practices and most recent scientific evidence relating to the preservation of safe food sources and natural environments; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is requested to adopt rules to carry out the purposes of establishing the PFAS Testing Grant Program and to ensure that all grants provided under the Program adhere to standards that promote fairness, transparency, and compliance with applicable laws; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director

S.C.R. NO. 128

of Health, President of the University of Hawaii System, and Hawaii's congressional delegation.

OFFERED BY: _____