



February 19, 2025

Oregon State Legislature
Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for Senate Bill 91, Relating to firefighting foam; prescribing an effective date.

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice Chair Brock Smith, and other members of the Committee,

On behalf of the more than 55,000 members and supporters of the Sierra Club Oregon Chapter, we write in support of Senate Bill 91, which would prohibit the sale, use, and disposal of firefighting foam containing perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

PFAS have been used in aqueous film-forming foams (AFFFs) for fighting liquid fuel fires since the 1970s. AFFFs are synthetic PFAS-containing foams designed for flammable liquid fires. Though extremely effective, they are also a major source of PFAS pollution in the United States and worldwide, particularly at military installations and airports. The military has identified PFAS contamination at more than 300 locations, and the foam is also used at airports, refineries, ports, and local fire stations. Firefighters who use these dangerous products have suffered from serious illnesses, and water supplies in nearby communities have been contaminated and required replacement. PFAS, known as "forever chemicals", are now linked to a variety of health problems, including kidney and testicular cancer, immune system damage, and high cholesterol. These chemicals can damage internal organs, including the liver, kidney, pancreas, and thyroid. PFAS exposure during pregnancy and childhood may permanently impair development. Efforts are now underway to protect people and the environment from these harmful substances especially those that put their well being at risk to protect our communities from wildfires.

PFAS contamination associated with firefighting has led to the development of effective PFAS-free foams, which are now available and being used in the U.S. and other countries. According to the national organization Safer States fifteen states have banned the sale of firefighting foam containing PFAS.¹ It is time to protect Oregonians and our environment by banning their sale, use, and disposal in Oregon. Switching to PFAS-free firefighting foams and ensuring the safe collection, transportation, and disposal of PFAS foams will save lives and protect the health of Oregonians.

We urge the adoption of SB 91 to address this critical issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Bowes, Policy Strategist

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Bowes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

¹ <https://www.saferstates.org/priorities/pfas/>