

Submitter: Caitlin Harrold

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3512

Dear Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Gamba, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Caitlin Harrold, and I live in Baker City, Oregon. I am writing in strong support of HB 3512 to eliminate toxic PFAS chemicals from consumer products and firefighting foam. This issue is deeply personal to me—both my husband and my father are firefighters, and their health, along with the safety of countless others in the profession, is at risk due to unnecessary exposure to these harmful chemicals.

Firefighters already put their lives on the line to protect our communities. They shouldn't have to face an increased risk of cancer and other serious health issues because of the very foam meant to keep them safe. Studies show that firefighters have a 9% higher rate of cancer than the general population—Oregon must take action now to protect them. A majority of states have already banned PFAS-containing firefighting foam, and it's time we do the same.

Beyond firefighter health, PFAS chemicals persist in our environment, contaminating soil, water, and wildlife. As a professional in the natural resource industry, it is extremely important to me that Oregon takes immediate action to prevent these chemicals from getting into our soil and water where they can impact the crops, pollinators, livestock and fish on which we depend. These "forever chemicals" accumulate in our bodies and have been linked to cancer, fertility issues, high cholesterol, and developmental problems in children. Our drinking water and ecosystems should not be burdened with chemicals that take thousands of years to break down when safer alternatives exist.

I urge you to support HB 3512 and take this critical step in protecting our firefighters, families, and environment from the harmful effects of PFAS. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Caitlin Harrold  
Baker City, Oregon