

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7348

To provide for the National Academies to study and report on a Federal research agenda to advance the understanding of PFAS, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 25, 2020

Mrs. FLETCHER (for herself, Ms. SLOTKIN, and Mr. POSEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

A BILL

To provide for the National Academies to study and report on a Federal research agenda to advance the understanding of PFAS, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Federal PFAS Re-
5 search Evaluation Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl sub-
9 stances (PFAS) are a group of man-made chemicals

1 that have been used in a wide range of products
2 since the 1940s including firefighting foam, car-
3 peting, packaging, and cookware. There are more
4 than 5,000 types of registered PFAS compounds.
5 This chemical class is not currently regulated at the
6 Federal level.

7 (2) PFAS have been detected in air, water, soil,
8 food, biosolids, and more. They accumulate and re-
9 main in the body for a long time, and can lead to
10 serious health effects including cancer, low infant
11 birthweight, liver and kidney issues, reproductive
12 and developmental problems, and more.

13 (3) There remains much unknown about PFAS
14 toxicity, human and environmental health effects, ex-
15 posure pathways, as well as effective removal, treat-
16 ment, and destruction methods, and safe alternatives
17 to PFAS.

18 (4) There is currently no cohesive, interagency
19 effort to address PFAS, and no Federal agency is
20 focused on a multidisciplinary, cross-sector ap-
21 proach. Rather, there are fragmented efforts at var-
22 ious agencies that have failed to address the full
23 scope of challenges presented by PFAS.

24 (5) Regulatory action and cleanup depend on
25 scientific analysis of toxicity data, decision making

1 on how best to deal with the thousands of PFAS,
2 and understanding the significance of the many ex-
3 posure pathways that exist. A consensus study by
4 the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering,
5 and Medicine would help inform decisions by Federal
6 and State Governments, industry, and other stake-
7 holders on how to best address PFAS.

8 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL ACADEMIES REPORTS.**

9 (a) RESEARCH ASSESSMENTS OF PFAS EXPOSURE
10 AND TOXICITY.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after
12 the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator
13 of the Environmental Protection Agency, in con-
14 sultation with the Director of the National Science
15 Foundation, the Secretary of Defense, the Director
16 of the National Institutes of Health, and other Fed-
17 eral agencies with expertise relevant to under-
18 standing PFAS exposure and toxicity, shall enter
19 into an agreement with the National Academies to
20 conduct a two-phase study and submit reports in ac-
21 cordance with this subsection to identify research
22 and development needed to advance human exposure
23 estimation and toxicity and hazard estimation of in-
24 dividual or total PFAS.

(2) PHASE I STUDY AND REPORT ON HUMAN
EXPOSURE ESTIMATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The phase I study required to be conducted under paragraph (1) shall, at a minimum—

(i) consider life-cycle information on the manufacture, use, and disposal of PFAS-containing products to identify exposure sources and potential exposure pathways for the public;

(ii) evaluate the fate and transport of PFAS and their breakdown products;

(iii) if feasible, estimate exposure to individual or total PFAS to determine relative source contributions for various exposure pathways (such as air, water, soil, or food);

(iv) determine environmentally relevant PFAS; and

(v) identify research needed to advance exposure estimation to individual or total PFAS.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the agreement described in paragraph (1) is finalized, the National

1 Academies shall submit to Congress a report
2 containing the findings and recommendations of
3 the study described in subparagraph (A) and
4 shall make such report available on a publicly
5 accessible website.

6 (3) PHASE II STUDY AND REPORT ON PFAS
7 TOXICITY AND HAZARD ESTIMATION.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—The phase II study re-
9 quired to be conducted under paragraph (1)
10 shall, at a minimum—

11 (i) review animal and human toxicity
12 information on the environmentally rel-
13 evant PFAS identified in the Phase I re-
14 port under paragraph (2) and develop an
15 approach for conducting a hazard assess-
16 ment of these PFAS;

17 (ii) give consideration as to whether
18 chemical category-based approaches for as-
19 sessing toxicity would be appropriate for
20 evaluating PFAS as a group; and

21 (iii) identify research needed to ad-
22 vance toxicity and hazard assessment of in-
23 dividual or total PFAS.

24 (B) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days
25 after the date on which the Phase I report is

submitted to Congress under paragraph (2), the National Academies shall submit to Congress a report containing the findings and recommendations of the study described in subparagraph (A) and shall make such report available on a publicly accessible website.

(b) RESEARCH ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES FOR PFAS CONTAMINATION IN THE ENVIRONMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Director of the National Science Foundation, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and other Federal agencies with expertise relevant to the development of PFAS alternatives and the management and treatment of PFAS, shall jointly enter into an agreement with the National Academies to conduct a study and submit a report in accordance with this subsection to better understand the research and development needed to advance the understanding of the extent and implications of environmental contamination by PFAS, how to manage and treat such contamination, and the development of safe alternatives.

1 (2) SCOPE OF STUDY.—The study described in
2 paragraph (1) shall, at a minimum, include the fol-
3 lowing:

4 (A) An assessment of the current research
5 on such issues.

6 (B) A description of the research gaps re-
7 lating to such issues.

8 (C) Recommendations on how the Federal
9 Government can address the research needs
10 identified pursuant to subparagraph (B).

11 (D) Recommendations on how research can
12 best incorporate considerations of socioeconomic
13 issues into the development of research pro-
14 posals and the conduct of research.

15 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 540 days after
16 the date on which the agreement described in para-
17 graph (1) is finalized, the National Academies shall
18 submit to Congress a report containing the findings
19 and recommendations of the study described in
20 paragraph (2) and shall make such report available
21 on a publicly accessible website.

22 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
23 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

24 (1) to the Administrator of Environmental Pro-
25 tection Agency, \$3,000,000; and

1 (2) to the Director of the National Science
2 Foundation, \$1,000,000.

3 **SEC. 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.**

4 Not later than 180 days after submission to Congress
5 of latest of the National Academies reports under section
6 3, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology
7 Policy, in coordination with all relevant Federal agencies,
8 shall submit to Congress an implementation plan for Fed-
9 eral PFAS research, development, and demonstration ac-
10 tivities. In preparing such an implementation plan, the Di-
11 rector shall take into consideration the recommendations
12 included in the reports in section 3.

13 **SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.**

14 In this Act:

15 (1) NATIONAL ACADEMIES.—The term “Na-
16 tional Academies” means the National Academies of
17 Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

18 (2) PFAS.—The term “PFAS” means per- and
19 polyfluoroalkyl substances.

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