



Testimony for PFAS MCL Proposed Rulemaking

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My name is Joanne Stanton. Cofounder of the Buxmont Coalition for Safer Water. Our coalition represents PFAS impacted residents in Bucks and Montgomery counties who have suffered numerous health impacts due to unregulated PFAS chemicals in our drinking water from 2 local DOD sites. I would like to go on record to state the importance of setting this MCL for PFAS.

I think it is important that the Board hears from impacted community members to understand the critical need for PFAS regulations.

My personal PFAS story started when I was a young mother. I was naïve - I thought that if water came out of my kitchen faucet – it was safe. I had no idea that we had over 40,000 chemicals in consumer use and that less than 10% of them have ever been tested for human health effects. This makes being a mom difficult. We shouldn't have to worry that untested and unregulated chemicals, like PFAS, can easily make their way into our drinking water.

I learned the hard way how important our water regulation are in safeguarding our health, especially the health of our kids.

Seven years ago, my hometown was devastated to discover that our drinking water had been highly contaminated with PFAS for close to 50 years, with some of the highest levels of PFAS pollution ever detected from public drinking water wells.

I *started to read* everything I could get my hands on about PFAS. When I began researching the health effects, I learned that some of these chemicals can cross the placenta and affect a developing fetus. Animal studies showed PFAS caused tumors, cancer, neurodevelopmental problems and even second-generation health effects.

The magnitude of what I was uncovering suddenly hit me like a ton of bricks. And my mind raced back to years earlier when my oldest son was diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumor at age 6.

Back then, after my son's surgery, epidemiologists came into our hospital room and began pummeling my husband and me with very pointed questions: Where do you live? Where was your early pregnancy? Have you or your husband ever worked with chemicals? They told us they'd found embryotic tissue in the center of my son's cancerous tumor. That meant it had started to form during my pregnancy.

There are 3 of us who grew up together in Warminster – on the same street, - within a few houses of each other - and ALL 3 us had children with brain tumors. All of our children's tumors were cancerous, and they had embryonic tissue at the core.

Our doctors immediately question our environmental exposures to chemicals, and we eventually learned that we all drank PFAS-contaminated water throughout our entire childhood, and during our pregnancies.

As a mother, it was gut wrenching for me to eventually be told that my PFAS exposure might have caused my child's cancer. My story is not unique, many families in my community and have been affected by PFAS.

In my hometown, we have had 3-year-olds with kidney cancer, and higher rates of childhood cancer when compared to others in the state. That means we have children who may never get a chance to do something *as simple as* ride a bike or put their first tooth under their pillow. We have new moms who don't feel they can safely breastfeed their babies because of the high levels of PFAS in their breast milk.

This is why we must move forward with the MCL rulemaking.

It's been 8 years since we learned about PFAS at our 2 military sites, yet the chemicals are still polluting our public waterways affecting clean drinking water sources and wildlife. PFAS discharge levels coming off base currently far exceed limits set in temporary discharge permits and DEP recently issued *DO NOT EAT THE FISH* advisories for our local waterways affected by PFAS. I am here to tell you that affected communities are more than dots on map and numbers on a graph. My community is filled with stories like mine.

This proposed MCL for PFAS has the power to change the course of history in our state.

I now realize- that stronger drinking water regulations that govern toxic chemicals like PFAS - could have prevented needless suffering for my family and many other families in my community. It may be too late for my son, with the proposed rulemaking for PFAS, but it's not for others.

Thank you for all the strides you have made to get to this point of the proposed rulemaking. I encourage the Board to make sure the proposed MCL for PFAS will ultimately ensures equal protection for all Pennsylvanians. The proposed rulemaking needs to include all water supplies, including individual private wells. As a matter of fact, our PFAS Pilot Health Study in Bucks and Montgomery Counties reported that people with private wells had higher levels of PFAS in their blood than those on public water supplies.

I also encourage the board to implement more protective PFOA/PFOS standards than 14 and 18 ppt as was proposed by Drexel and Cambridge Environmental Consulting. These MCLs should be based on the toxicology analysis not a cost/benefit analysis. MCLs must ensure safe drinking water for vulnerable populations like children!

I also encourage additional PFAS compounds for MCLs, as was proposed by Drexel in their toxicology assessment. Most notably for those DEP sampled for and found within the state's environment. Again, our PFAS Pilot Health Study in Bucks and Montgomery Counties reported that PFHxS was the second highest compound found in blood sampled in our community- yet it does not have an MCL proposed!

We have waited far too long...this state MCL needs to be implemented quickly and do away with monitoring delays. It also need to ensure monitoring takes place with no waivers for any systems.

I encourage you to move forward and set a state drinking water standard for PFAS. You have the POWER to help change the way things are and ensure that our children and grandchildren, and generations to come, are better protected from PFAS than we have been. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.