

December 2, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

We are writing to ask the Biden-Harris Administration to move swiftly to institute federal procurement policies to address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Since these harmful chemicals are difficult -- and sometimes impossible -- to clean up and last forever in the environment, we urge immediate action to discourage their continued use in products.

During your campaign, you pledged to make PFAS a priority, including a commitment in your environmental justice plan to tackle PFAS by “prioritizing substitutes through procurement.” The EPA’s recently released PFAS Strategic Roadmap included some important national commitments, but lacks an “upstream” focus on pollution prevention. A separate White House fact sheet announcing a government-wide initiative to tackle PFAS also failed to mention procurement policies. We need more action to stop creating the problem in the first place.

A federal procurement mandate to steer purchasing toward PFAS-free products would help prevent PFAS from entering the environment. Each year the federal government purchases billions of dollars in goods and services from the private sector, including many products that often contain intentionally-added PFAS such as clothing, carpeting, floor treatments, curtains, upholstered furniture, cleaners, personal care products, food containers and firefighting turnout gear. Many safer solutions already exist among product categories, and a new federal directive would stimulate the market to produce even more.

States, municipalities, institutions, and corporations are already using their purchasing power to stop contributing to the PFAS contamination crisis. Federal action would significantly accelerate this progress. In late October, the Governor of Michigan, whose residents are directly suffering from PFAS water contamination, [directed the state](#) to use its \$2.5 billion procurement budget to move to safer materials and solutions. Other states, including [New York](#), Connecticut and [Minnesota](#) have stepped up to prefer PFAS-free products and other safer materials.

We urge you to issue a strong White House directive on procurement. This directive would be a *practical and immediate action to start turning the tide of products containing intentionally-added PFAS* in the marketplace. In particular, we strongly support a new federal policy that:

- Directs federal agencies to avoid the purchase of products made with intentionally-added PFAS to the maximum extent possible. This directive should be clear that it applies to the entire class of PFAS.
- Sets a deadline for EPA to publish environmentally preferable purchasing recommendations addressing PFAS, including criteria, specifications, and standards to support procurement of safer alternatives.

- Mandates training for federal procurement officers on the use of EPA's recommendations for sustainable purchasing and alternatives to products containing added-PFAS.
- Provides the public with regular progress reports on agency-by-agency compliance.

Mr. President, we appreciate your administration's commitment to addressing PFAS. By issuing a strong directive on federal procurement, you will create a significant marketplace incentive to seek safer alternative products and solutions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Signed,

Alaska Community Action on Toxics
American Sustainable Business Network
Biomonitoring Resource Center/Commonweal
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
Center for Environmental Health
Clean and Healthy New York
Clean Cape Fear
Clean Water Action
Coalition for A Safe and Healthy Connecticut
Consumer Reports
Defend Our Health
Earthjustice
Ecology Center
Environmental Defense Fund
Environmental Protection Network
Environmental Working Group
For Love of Water (FLOW)
Freshwater Future
Great Lakes PFAS Action Network
Green Science Policy Institute
Healthy Legacy Coalition
International Living Future Institute
League of Conservation Voters
Merrimack Citizens for Clean Water
Natural Resources Defense Council

Oregon Environmental Council
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Safer Chemicals Healthy Families
Safer States
Sierra Club
Toxic-Free Future
Union of Concerned Scientists
Vermont Conservation Voters
We the People of Detroit
West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC)
Zero Waste Washington