



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
22 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

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COMMISSIONER

March 28, 2023

Senator Donna Bailey and Representative Anne Perry
Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 132, *An Act to Require Health Insurance Carriers to Provide Coverage for Blood Testing for Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances*

Dear Senator Bailey and Representative Perry:

My name is Beth Valentine and I am the Director of the Fund to Address PFAS Contamination. I am writing on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry neither for nor against LD 132, *An Act to Require Health Insurance Carriers to Provide Coverage for Blood Testing for Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances*.

This bill requires carriers offering health plans in Maine to provide coverage for blood testing for perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

The Fund to Address PFAS Contamination (“PFAS Fund”) was established in April 2022 (7 MRSA chapter 10-D). The permitted uses of the PFAS Fund include but are not limited to “[m]onitoring the health of a person, and member of that person’s household, whose agricultural land is found to be contaminated by PFAS” and “[p]roviding medical care to a person found to have blood levels of PFAS greater than the general population or health effects associated with exposure to PFAS.”

The law establishing the PFAS Fund created an Advisory Committee to make recommendations to the Department regarding the administration of the PFAS Fund to assist farmers impacted by PFAS contamination. In turn, the Advisory Committee has established working groups to examine core priority areas. Beginning in January 2023, the Health Subcommittee has been working to develop, analyze, and recommend strategies for the provision of blood testing, medical monitoring, and mental health support in the short- and long-term for individuals whose drinking water or agricultural land is found to be contaminated by PFAS.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection is in the process of sampling water and soil at over 1,000 sites around the State where records indicate that biosolids were spread over the

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past four decades. As of December 2022, DEP had sampled approximately 214 sites and taken groundwater samples at 1,525 residences.¹ Of those residences, 23 percent had results exceeding Maine's interim drinking water standard of 20 ppt of a sum of six PFAS compounds. That is, the water serving about 350 homes is not considered safe to drink. DEP provides these homes with water filtration systems.

Additionally, all community public water systems and non-transient, non-community schools and daycares in Maine are required to sample finished drinking water for PFAS. Sampling data is available on the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website: [Maine DWP - PFAS in Public Water Systems](#). Analysis by a member of the PFAS Fund's Health Subcommittee indicates that there are 6,000 students enrolled in schools with water systems that exceed the 20 ppt threshold.²

In sum, ongoing sampling may reveal a significant number of people for whom it would be advisable to have their blood serum levels of PFAS checked. The PFAS Fund is working with Maine CDC to establish a system to provide blood testing primarily to impacted farmers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Beth Valentine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Beth" and last name "Valentine" clearly distinguishable.

Beth Valentine, Director
Fund to Address PFAS Contamination

¹ Each site typically includes multiple fields (i.e., agricultural land, pasture, or other land) and may also cross district, town, and county boundaries. DEP, Status of Maine's PFAS Soil and Groundwater Investigation at Sludge and Septage Land and Application Sites (Jan. 15, 2023), at 5, 24.

² Furthermore, other segments of the population, including firefighters and current and former members of the military, may be subject to PFAS through their occupations.