

## Written Testimony on S.20

Senate Committee on Health and Welfare

Chris Carrigan, Vice President

March 11, 2021

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Chair Lyons and members of the Committee,

Regarding S.20, a bill regarding restrictions on the use, manufacture, sale, and distribution of PFAS chemicals and compounds in firefighting foam, food packaging, rugs, carpets, aftermarket stain and water resistance treatments, and ski wax, as well as expansion of the list of chemicals of high concern, the Vermont Chamber is concerned with the legislation's potential impact on Vermont's manufacturers.

While the Vermont Chamber's Aerospace and Aviation Division supports the federal exemption regarding the use of firefighting foams containing PFAS compounds for aircraft rescue, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce has several concerns with the bill as currently written. These include:

- The definition of PFAS is too broad, and, as written, would ban all materials sharing any chemical properties with PFAS and would ban all PFAS alternatives.
  - **Recommendation:** Strike “**or a chemical compound meant to replace perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances that has similar chemical properties,**” and define “perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances or PFAS as a class of fluorinated organic chemicals containing at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom.”
- The definition of “bisphenols” is too broad.
  - **Recommendation:** Define bisphenols based on a chemical structure; not as “a material used primarily in the manufacture of polycarbonate plastic and epoxy resins.”
- Having a ban on such a wide array of products, agents and equipment will expose our manufacturers to further supply chain disruption, uncertainty, and additional regulations and costs during a pandemic, and, subsequently, will place them at a competitive disadvantage; and

- Any addition of a PFAS chemical to the list of Chemicals of High Concern should be done based on the weight of credible, scientific evidence and reviewed by the Department of Health.

The Vermont Chamber supports a scientific approach, including definitions to aid chemical hazard understanding and how a chemical is used and tested. Having such an approach will provide uniformity, clarity and certainty for our manufacturers that operate in compliance with existing state and federal laws and with international standards of quality assurance. The Vermont Chamber also supports a federal solution and harmonization of regulatory standards and the recent reforms of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) at the federal level and the evaluation of chemicals based on the health risks they pose.

In closing, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce asks that S.20 be amended and to acknowledge that the vast majority of manufacturers operate responsibly, with great care given to environmental considerations and in compliance with existing state and federal laws, while providing Vermonters with high paying employment and a high standard of living.