



Durbin, Duckworth, Colleagues Introduce Landmark Legislation To Fund PFAS Cleanup

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CHICAGO – U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) joined Senators Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Tom Carper (D-DE), and Chuck Schumer (D-NY) in introducing legislation to help communities combat per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination and exposure in drinking water and groundwater. The *Providing Financial Assistance to States (PFAS) for Testing and Treatment Act* would provide substantial federal funding for PFAS remediation in drinking water, and groundwater, including private wells.

Federal and state-level testing has revealed the widespread presence of PFAS chemicals in drinking water systems and groundwater throughout the United States. Last month, it was announced that the U.S. Air Force [detected](#) the two main types of PFAS during site inspections at Scott Air Force Base (AFB), which may be impacting off-base water wells. The Air Force is now working to determine how many water wells might be impacted, whether people are consuming the water from those wells, and measure the water for PFOS/PFOA contamination. PFAS chemicals are potentially linked to serious health effects, including cancer, harm to the kidneys and liver, harm to the developmental and reproductive systems, and reduced effectiveness of vaccines.

“PFAS contamination in drinking water is a matter of public health. With contamination concerns at Scott Air Force Base and in the surrounding community, Congress must act quickly to halt spread of PFAS chemicals,” said Durbin. “With this new legislation, we can tackle this public health issue by cleaning up our drinking water systems because families shouldn’t have to worry about what’s in their water when they turn on the tap or use their wells.”

“Every American has the right to drink clean water, which is why I am deeply concerned about the threat that PFAS contamination poses to Illinoisans and the public

health,” said Duckworth. “This bill would go a long way in helping make sure communities across our state and the country have the resources necessary to respond to and remediate contamination sites.”

The *PFAS Testing and Treatment Act* would help states respond to PFAS contamination and the health risks these material present to the public. This legislation would:

- Increase funding for a newly created grant program within the Safe Drinking Water Act State Revolving Loan Fund to \$1 billion per year over the next 10 years to go towards the clean-up of PFAS and other emerging contaminants in drinking water. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is directed to prioritize this funding to states according to the prevalence and remediation costs associated with PFAS. The eligible use of funds is also extended to the testing and treatment of private wells, which supply drinking water for over 43 million Americans.
- Create a new grant program under the Clean Water Act that provides funding to states to help remediate groundwater contamination from PFOA and PFOS, two of the most prevalent PFAS chemicals. This section of the bill requires that groundwater contamination be addressed in accordance with interim guidance issued by the EPA in August 2018 or an applicable state, tribal or other standard, where those exist. These interim requirements will remain in place until the EPA acts to designate these chemicals as “hazardous substances” under the Superfund law. This program would be authorized at \$1 billion per year over the next 10 years. EPA is directed to prioritize funding to states according to the prevalence and remediation costs associated with PFAS.

Along with Durbin, Duckworth, Shaheen, Carper, and Schumer, this legislation is also sponsored by Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Jack Reed (D-RI), Gary Peters (D-MI), Ed Markey (D-MA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Bob Casey (D-PA), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Chris Coons (D-DE), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and Bernie Sanders (I-VT).