

# Kaul joins bipartisan group of AGs in calling on Congress to combat PFAS contamination

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AG Josh Kaul has signed on to a letter pushing for Congress to combat the “public health threat” posed by chemical contamination of drinking water.

As part of a bipartisan coalition of 22 state attorneys general, Kaul is urging lawmakers in Washington to pass legislation to address toxic per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, more commonly known as PFAS. These chemicals, which were used for decades in products ranging from non-stick cookware to textiles with Scotchgard, have been linked to kidney and testicular cancer, thyroid disease, liver damage, immune system effects and other conditions.

“Drinking water contamination can result in serious public health problems,” Kaul said in a release Tuesday. “Congress should take swift action to protect the safety of our water, including by designating PFAS as a hazardous substance.”

A database maintained by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources shows 21 sites contaminated by PFAS in the state, more than half of which are on active military bases. The AGs in the letter indicated PFAS toxins are found in the firefighting foam used by the U.S. military and local fire departments and called on lawmakers to ban the chemicals from federal facilities.

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The letter also called on Congress to designate certain PFAS chemicals as hazardous substances, recommend the U.S. Geological Survey conduct a nationwide sampling to determine PFAS exposure and the Environmental Protection Agency add the chemicals to its Toxic Release Inventory database.

Finally, the letter urged federal lawmakers to fund community response efforts to clean up drinking water and provide medical screenings for PFAS exposure.

A DOJ spokeswoman said Kaul joined the coalition to raise awareness about the issue and had not yet determined an appropriate federal funding level to address PFAS contamination in the state.

See the letter:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/190730-PFAS-Letter.pdf>

See the DNR database:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/botw/AdvSearchAction.do>