

U.S. Sen. Baldwin calling on EPA to deliver on promises made in PFAS action plan

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin joined a group of 30 Senators, led by Senators Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), today in a letter to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler requesting an updated timeline for when the EPA will implement commitments made in the agency's plan to combat exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The EPA released its plan – the PFAS Action Plan – [one year ago today](#) and has yet to implement many of the commitments outlined in the strategy.

The Senators wrote, *“As you are aware, communities across the country are struggling to respond to the widespread issue of PFAS contamination. The human health risks from this class of chemicals, which include birth defects, various forms of cancer, and immune system dysfunction, are still being examined, and the uncertainty has caused great concern among our constituents.”*

The lawmakers went on to underscore that the PFAS Action Plan alone is insufficient to address the full scope and urgency of the problems associated with PFAS exposure, which is why failure to take an initial step to implement this plan is particularly concerning. They also highlighted that the EPA committed to establish federal drinking water standards last year for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), two of the most prevalent PFAS chemicals, but have also failed to follow through on that pledge.

In their letter, the Senators went on to address other parts of the plan that have not

been prioritized, including important remediation efforts to help expedite cleanup of PFAS contamination under the Superfund law. **They wrote**, *“Yet, despite then-Administrator Scott Pruitt committing the EPA to designating these materials [PFOA and PFOS] as hazardous substances in May 2018, the EPA has not even sent a proposal to the Office of Management & Budget for interagency review, let alone published it for public comment.”*

The Senators closed their letter with a request that the EPA provide an update on the status of every commitment made in the PFAS Action Plan, as well as an update on the timeline for executing the priorities included in the strategy.

They concluded, *“The health and environmental threats posed by PFAS are significant. Communities across America demand that the EPA help protect them from PFAS exposure. They deserve the confidence that their water is safe and free of harmful levels of PFAS contamination.”*

The letter is available [here](#).

In addition to Senators Baldwin, Shaheen and Gillibrand, the letter was also signed by Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Tom Carper (D-DE), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Bob Casey (D-PA), Tina Smith (D-MN), Jack Reed (D-RI), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Angus King (I-ME), Ed Markey (D-MA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Patty Murray (D-WA), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Chris Coons (D-DE) and Maria Cantwell (D-WA).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).

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