



TOWN OF MERRIMACK, NH

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February 15, 2018

Sen. Sharon Carson (Committee Chair)
State House, Room 106
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301
Sharon.Carson@leg.state.nh.us

Sen. John Reagan (Vice Chair)
State House, Room 107
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301
johnreagan111@gmail.com

Re: HB 485 Comment Letter

Dear Senators Carson, Reagan, and members of the Executive Departments and Administration Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 485, which seeks to allow the Department of Environmental Services (DES) update drinking water standards every five years and allow the department to test airborne chemicals that could end up in groundwater.

The Town of Merrimack (Town) is deeply concerned about the perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) contamination in the environment. By now, I'm sure that you and your committee are quite familiar with the contamination issues that have been experienced in Merrimack, Litchfield, Bedford, Amherst, and the Pease Tradeport areas. For more than 2 years, the Town has been trying to work with affected residents, DES, and St. Gobain Performance Plastics to come up with solutions to the contamination issues. Time and time again, the Town has been unable to adequately address the situation, due to a lack of NH standards for contamination levels and the reliance on the US EPA for advisory standards that are not enforceable by DES or any other state/local agency.

The Town is committed to the public to remain vigilant regarding the safety of its citizens and make every effort to keep abreast of the myriad complex issues related to this problem. The Town of Merrimack has always been at the forefront of protecting public health and the environment and agrees with regulations that are based on sound science and research. Foremost, we are all supportive of safe drinking water – that is what the professionals in the Town help ensure every day.

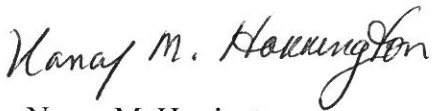
Assessing P: 603-424-5136 F: 603-424-0461	Community Development P: 603-424-3531 F: 603-424-1408	Finance P: 603-424-7075 F: 603-424-0516	Human Resources P: 603-424-2331 F: 603-424-0461	Media Services P: 603-423-8561 F: 603-424-0461
Public Assistance P: 603-423-8535 F: 603-424-0516	Public Works Administration P: 603-424-5137 F: 603-424-1408	Town Council P: 603-424-2331 F: 603-424-0461	Town Manager P: 603-424-2331 F: 603-424-0461	

We believe that coupled with the language in HB 1101 (which recently passed the House and is now in Senate Committee) this bill would provide DES with the capability and tools to respond to not only to the known PFOA/PFOS issues (both groundwater quality and air emission standards), but also to emerging contaminants, and provide enforceable standards that would not only benefit Merrimack, but the state as a whole.

The Town urges the committee to look favorably on this bill which would provide DES with the tools they need to address contamination issues now and in the future through reasonable and appropriate regulation of these existing and emerging contaminants.

Please feel free to contact me at (603) 424-2331, if you have any questions or comments on the information provided in this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy M. Harrington".

Nancy M. Harrington
Town Council Chair
Town of Merrimack NH

CC: Senator Gary Daniels (Gary.Daniels@leg.state.nh.us)