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House of Representatives
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November 29, 2018

The Honorable Tom Wolf
Office of the Governor
225 Main Capital Building
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Governor Wolf,

I commend you on forming a PFAS Action Team to develop a comprehensive response to identify and eliminate sources of PFAS water contamination. As you know, this issue is extremely important to families in my district and we appreciate your efforts in this regard.

As a continuation of our past work to address these issues, I would like to invite the Action Team to hold a future meeting in my district where I'm happy to make arrangements to see, firsthand, some of the impacts this contamination has had on our community as well as the benefits our past work together has yielded in providing safe drinking water for residents. Additionally, I would like to invite the Department of Health to hold a meeting in my district to discuss a summary of the recent blood testing pilot program so residents can better understand what we've learned from that process.

In 2016 I called for the federal government to provide us with carbon filters to remove all detectable levels of contaminants from our drinking water, blood testing and continued biomonitoring for any residents exposed to the chemicals and a comprehensive health study so we can understand what, if any, health effects we face as a result of the exposure to these chemicals. Thanks to our cooperative efforts, some communities now have in place carbon filters to remove detectable levels of contaminants from their water but there still remains more work to be done.

It is my understanding that the Action Team will be led by the Secretaries of Environmental Protection, Health, Military and Veteran Affairs, Community and Economic Development, Agriculture, and the State Fire Commissioner and will specifically address strategies to deliver safe drinking water and minimize risks from firefighting foam and other PFAS sources, manage environmental contamination, create specific site plans, explore funding for remediation efforts, and increase public education.

As I'm sure you are aware, there is vast disagreement in the scientific community about whether there is a "safe" level of consumption for the chemicals in question and, if so, what that level might be. Further evidence of the lack of understanding of the harm these chemicals may cause may be found in the national effort underway to study the health effects resulting from exposure to these chemicals. To best protect Pennsylvania residents, I firmly believe we must not tolerate any detectable level of these chemicals in our drinking water in Pennsylvania.

Those who polluted our drinking water must be held accountable. Accordingly, I continue to believe the federal government should provide blood tests and continued biomonitoring for anyone who has been exposed to these chemicals in addition to the aforementioned comprehensive study of potential health effects. In addition, any entities responsible for the pollution, including the federal government, should be forced to bear the costs of remediating contamination they caused – not the ratepayers or municipal governments.

Of course, in addition to all these issues surrounding public health, the federal government should move expeditiously to remediate the former military base in my district which is at the heart of the contamination issue so it can be restored to productive use for the residents and taxpayers of our Commonwealth.

I very much appreciate all your past efforts to work with me to address these pervasive issues in my district and I look forward to working with you, your administration and the PFAS Action Team to protect our residents from any harmful health effects resulting from PFAS contamination of our drinking water. Given that my district has been dealing with the direct effects of this contamination for the longest time and has been the focus of our joint remediation efforts, it is clearly the best location to continue this work. I hope you will accept my invitation to build upon today's meeting by having your PFAS Action Team and the Department of Health visit my district soon.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd Stephens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the start of the name.

Todd Stephens, Member
Pennsylvania House of Representatives