City of Santa Rosa

October 3, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor
State of California
1021 O Street, Room 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 727 (Weber) Signature Request (As Enrolled on September 18, 2023)

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the City of Santa Rosa, I respectfully request your signature on AB 727 (Weber), which would ban the sale of cleaning products containing Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in California.

NATALIE ROGERS
Mayor

DIANNA MACDONALD
Vice Mayor

EDDIE ALVAREZ
VICTORIA FLEMING
JEFF OKREPKIE
CHRIS ROGERS
MARK STAPP

The City of Santa Rosa, located approximately 50 miles north of San Francisco, California, operates a Regional Water Reuse System that serves approximately 230,000 residents in Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Cotati, Sebastopol, and unincorporated portions of Sonoma County. The hub of the Water Reuse System is the Laguna Treatment Plant (Plant), which cleans and recycles approximately 7 billion gallons of wastewater each year from homes, businesses, and industry in the region. During dry to normal years nearly 100% of our tertiary recycled water is beneficially reused for agricultural and urban irrigation, as well as to recharge the Geysers steamfields to produce clean and renewable energy. Our state accredited environmental laboratory, located at the Plant, analyzes drinking water, sewage, and industrial waste to ensure it complies with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations, and to protect public health, the environment, and our watershed.

In recent years, PFAS compounds have become a topic of public concern due to their high mobility and resistance to breaking down naturally in the environment, as well as the persistent detection of PFAS compounds in people's bodies. In 2021 the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) announced and began implementation of the "PFAS Strategic Roadmap" which outlines a whole-agency approach to addressing PFAS.

One of the three central directives of the roadmap is to pursue a comprehensive approach to "proactively prevent PFAS from entering air, land, and water at levels that can adversely impact human health and the environment." To this end, several additional action items are underway, including the development of an Effluent Limitations Guidelines program and recently issued USEPA guidance for reducing discharges of PFAS into waterways by leveraging the existing National Polluntant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting system and local industrial pretreatment programs.

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Consistent with USEPA action and guidance, the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board) issued a statewide monitoring and reporting order in 2020 that required wastewater agencies to monitor and report for PFAS in influent, effluent and biosolids.

Preliminary data from the Water Board demonstrates that domestic inputs represent a significant source of PFAS entering wastewater systems, meaning that products people use in their homes and businesses are contributing a large portion of the PFAS that ends up in the wastewater system. This represents a source that is not controllable through local pretreatment and enforcement programs, which typically focus on industrial sources. For this reason, a statewide and product-focused approach is necessary to remove PFAS from cleaning products, many of which have a direct pathway to the wastewater system as part of their intended use. Similar bans on PFAS in other types of products associated with a direct nexus to wastewater have already been enacted for textiles, cosmetics, cookware, and food packaging.

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It is important to note that PFAS chemicals are both ubiquitous and indestructible. In some cases PFAS can be removed from water and wastewater at the end of the cycle through advanced treatment technology. However, there is no technologically feasible method for the large-scale destruction of PFAS compounds. Instead, once removed, PFAS residuals are merely displaced to another waste stream and typically cycle back through the waste management process. For these reasons, source control and pollution prevention strategies such as the one presented in AB 727 are the most cost effective and meaningful approaches to managing PFAS pollution in the environment.

The author and co-sponsors of AB 727 have been actively engaged with the opposition to address their concerns by extending the deadline for compliance for certain products that need the additional time to reformulate their products. Additionally, AB 727 has been amended to address the concerns around enforcement to provide the tools necessary for implementation.

For these reasons, the City of Santa Rosa supports AB 246. Should you have any questions please contact our legislative advocate, Alyssa Silhi with the Renne Public Policy Group, at (916) 974-9270.

Sincerely,

Natalie Rogers
Mayor

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