



American Forest & Paper Association

March 19, 2024

The Honorable Tom Carper
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment and Public
Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment and Public
Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Carper and Ranking Member Capito,

I write to you today to express support for the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee's efforts to find common ground and advance legislation to address unintended outcomes from EPA's proposed listing of PFOA and PFOS as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).

The American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) is the national trade association of the paper and wood products industry and advances public policies that promote a strong and sustainable U.S. forest products industry in the global marketplace. The industry makes essential products, including tissue products, pulp used in diapers and other personal hygiene products, papers for communication and education, building/construction products, and packaging for food, beverages, foodservice, cleaning supplies, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and other consumer products. The forest products industry directly employs about 925,000 men and women and is built on principles of sustainability: contributing to the circular economy and producing recyclable products from a renewable resource. We are among the top 10 manufacturing sector employers in 43 states.

In paper products manufacturing, sustainable materials management includes the beneficial use of paper mill residuals, largely composed of tree fiber, as a fertilizer. These mill residuals often are beneficially used for agricultural or forest lands, and provide reduced soil erosion, less need for irrigation, increased soil nutrient-holding capacity, and reduced soil compaction, which significantly improves plant growth. It is important to ensure that the listing of PFOA and PFOS as hazardous substances under CERCLA does not lead to unintended outcomes – such as impeding or preventing the safe and beneficial use of paper mill residuals as a fertilizer.

While PFOA and PFOS are widespread in the environment, detection limits are extremely low. This means they may sometimes be detected in many materials, including paper mill residuals, albeit at de minimis levels comparable or lower than the background levels found in common household dust. If pulp and paper mill residuals can no longer be used as a fertilizer, then the increase in greenhouse gases from both transporting residuals by truck to specialized landfills, and the subsequent release of methane from those landfills, would result in a significant negative environmental impact.

We thank the Committee for holding this important hearing to examine the potential unintended outcomes of this proposed CERCLA listing, and we look forward to continued engagement with Senators as they work towards a commonsense, bipartisan solution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Landry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie Landry
Vice President, Government Affairs
American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA)