



**County
Health Officials
of New York**
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SUPPORTS

A.445/S.439 (Steck/Hoylman)

**AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to reducing
the use of PFAS chemicals in firefighting activities**

New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO) supports S.439/A.445 which would prohibit the manufacture, sale and distribution of firefighting foam containing perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS chemicals), except in certain settings.

This legislation will limit the discharge or use of class B firefighting foam that contain intentionally added perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS chemicals) which are known to seep into groundwater and result in ground water contamination. It will also restrict its exposure to firefighters in their training and operations who, according to a study conducted by the National Institute for Occupational safety and Health, have a moderate increase in cancer diagnosis and cancer-related deaths as compared to the general population.

A report by the Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry (ATSDR) noted that studies regarding exposure to PFAS, which are known to accumulate in the human body over time, could lead to adverse human health effects. Exposure to PFAS chemicals have been associated with damage to liver, thyroid and immune system and are also linked to increases in cholesterol, decreased fertility and can affect the growth, learning and behavior of infants and older children.

A number of communities throughout New York State have experienced ground and surface water contamination of both public and private water supplies, linked to the use of firefighting foams. Numerous state, national and international organizations representing firefighters support the use of safe fluorine-free foam alternatives that are available and widely used.

NYSACHO, therefore, supports this legislation, which would protect firefighters from exposure to PFAS chemicals and limit potential contamination of drinking water sources, and adverse effects on human health. NYSACHO recommends this legislation be enacted into law.

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