



**SIERRA CLUB**  
NORTH STAR CHAPTER

**North Star Chapter**  
2300 Myrtle Ave, Suite 260  
St Paul, MN 55114

February 4, 2021

Dear Chair Hansen, Vice Chair Wazlawik and the Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the North Star Chapter of the Sierra Club in support of HF79 Food packaging chemical use regulated.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a class of synthetic organic substances that are persistent, mobile, bioaccumulate, and are toxic. They do not occur in nature and do not easily breakdown. They are found in the blood of more than 98% of Americans.

PFAS are linked to diseases including kidney, breast, and testicular cancer; liver, thyroid, and pancreatic diseases; high cholesterol; hormone disruption; ulcerative colitis; and immune system effects. An Oakdale, Minnesota [study](#) found links to reproductive problems including infertility, premature birth, and low birth weight babies. Another recent [study](#) found that vaccines are less effective in people with high blood levels of PFAS.

Paper products such as microwave popcorn bags, sandwich wrappers and deli take-out containers are often treated with PFAS to make them water and grease resistant. The PFAS can migrate from the packaging into food. Consumers have no way of knowing what has been treated with PFAS and are not able to make choices to avoid it. This is also causing confusion for people who want to compost food packaging but are not sure if it is safe to do that. The same studies that found PFAS in food packaging found that similar packaging does not contain PFAS indicating that alternatives are readily available.

Because PFAS is in food packaging and food, it also ends up contaminating compost, landfills, and biosolids. When PFAS contaminated water, biosolids, or compost is spread on farmland, the PFAS can migrate into crops grown there.

During outreach activities with our members and the public, people were generally not aware that PFAS was used in food packaging and indicated that they do not want PFAS in their food.

We hope that Minnesota joins Maine, Washington, and New York and bans PFAS from food packaging.

Sincerely,

Lori Olinger  
Chair, Zero Waste Task Force  
Sierra Club North Star Chapter