



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

New York Bans Dangerous, Indestructible 'Forever Chemicals' From Pizza Boxes and Other Food Packaging

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL December 3, 2020

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NEW YORK -- Today, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law legislation ([S.8817/A.4739-C](#)) sponsored by Senator Brad Hoylman and Assembly Member Patricia Fahy that bans the use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFAS) in food packaging. Studies have linked PFAS chemicals to increased cancer risk, kidney disease, and weakened immune systems, among other negative health impacts.

Senator Hoylman said: “Today, New York joins Washington State and Maine in passing strong protections against cancer-causing PFAS chemicals in food packaging, such as pizza boxes and fast food containers from restaurants like Wendy’s and McDonald’s. PFAS chemicals, which are called ‘forever chemicals’ because they’re practically indestructible, have been linked to harmful health effects including decreased fertility, weakened immune systems, low infant birth rates, and increased risks for certain cancers. I’m thrilled to see these dangerous chemicals banned in food packaging and the public health — especially that of our children — protected as a result. I’m grateful to Governor Cuomo for signing our bill and in particular Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins for making PFAS chemical safety a priority, along with Assembly Member Fahy and the many environmental and health advocates for getting this legislation across the finish line, including the JustGreen

Partnership.”

Assembly Member Pat Fahy said: “When we buy food from the grocery store or takeout from a restaurant, we assume that product is safe for our families. PFAS -- a dangerous and cancer-causing class of chemicals commonly used in everyday food packaging -- however, is anything but safe for New Yorkers. The short-chain PFAS most commonly used in food packaging has been shown to have similar toxicity to long-banned long-chain PFAS. New Yorkers need to be assured of non-toxic food and water, and I am proud to have championed this legislation alongside Senator Brad Hoylman to protect New York families’ health, and thank Governor Cuomo for signing into . I am proud New York leads the way, once again, in the national effort to reduce exposure to these dangerous and toxic chemicals.”

Kathy Curtis, Executive Director of Clean & Healthy NY and Co-Leader of JustGreen Partnership, said: “We applaud Governor Cuomo for capping off a legacy-defining session for environmental health in New York State. The chemical industry doesn’t get to call the shots in New York. We thank the Governor, Senator Hoylman, and Assemblymember Fahy for their leadership and commitment to ensuring New Yorkers can trust that the food we eat and the water we drink is safe.”

Kate Kurera, Deputy Director, Environmental Advocates NY said: "Today New York continued down the path of ridding cancer-causing PFAS chemicals from our environment by banning PFAS in food packaging. It is shocking just how pervasive these chemicals are and they have absolutely no place near the food we consume. Governor Cuomo, Assembly Member Fahy, and Senator Hoylman should be applauded for standing for New Yorker's health."

Senator Hoylman and Assembly Member Fahy’s S.8817/A.4739-C amends New York’s Environmental Conservation Law to prohibit the sale of food packaging containing intentionally added PFAS chemicals. Companies found violating the law will be subject to a \$10,000 first-time fine with subsequent violations reaching up to \$25,000 penalty. The EPA,

CDC, and NYS DEC have all found a litany of deadly health effects associated with PFAS. Any level of these chemicals is simply unsafe for New Yorkers. With the support of a coalition of environmental advocacy groups in the JustGreen Partnership, it is clear PFAS have no place in food packaging.