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Good morning, Mr. Chairman and honorable committee members. My name is Audrey Ernstberger, I am a staff attorney and lobbyist for Kentucky Resources Council (KRC). As many of you know, KRC is a non-profit and nonpartisan membership organization providing legal and technical assistance without charge on energy and environmental issues across the Commonwealth.

As you review SJR 149 in committee this morning, I would like to express KRC's appreciation to the sponsors for their efforts in directing the Energy and Environment Cabinet to provide assistance, on request, to permitted entities in the Commonwealth that discharge directly or indirectly into Kentucky's waters, on the matter of PFAS contamination.

While not explicitly included in the findings, the attention that the resolution calls for regarding PFAS is timely and fully justified, since they include chemicals that pose a considerable threat to our environment and community health. Due to their enduring nature, they are called "forever" chemicals, with documented instances of significant contamination of groundwater and public water supplies across the nation. The EPA is currently taking steps to regulate PFAS, focusing initially on drinking water and wastewater discharges, and is moving towards listing PFAs as hazardous substances.

EPA is proposing more rigorous regulation of PFAS because peer-reviewed scientific studies have shown that exposure to certain levels of PFAS may lead to the following health problems:

- Reproductive effects such as decreased fertility or increased high blood pressure in pregnant women.
- Developmental effects or delays in children, including low birth weight, accelerated puberty, bone variations, or behavioral changes.
- Increased risk of some cancers, including prostate, kidney, and testicular cancers.
- Reduced ability of the body's immune system to fight infections, including reduced vaccine response.
- Interference with the body's natural hormones.
- Increased cholesterol levels and/or risk of obesity.

In light of these health implications for both humans and the environment, we support the resolution as a step towards better management of these problematic chemicals.

We would encourage the Committee to consider, when the Cabinet's proposed regulations on municipal sewage sludge used as fertilizers comes before it in the next month, to consider whether those regulations go far enough in requiring cities to test sludges before releasing them to farmers for application to crop and forage land, and whether farmers deserve a better explanation from the cities of the risks of contaminants in the sludge like PFAs.

Thank you for your consideration of SJR 149.