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WRITTEN STATEMENT

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ON BEHALF OF  
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MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE  
SENATE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS COMMITTEE

SF 834  
PFAS PROHIBITED IN CERTAIN PRODUCTS  
OPPOSED

MARCH 24, 2023

Chair Murphy, Vice Chair Mitchell, and members of the Committee, the **Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM)** strongly urges the committee to oppose SF 834 which would ban products from being sold in Minnesota if the products contain PFAS substances.

AHAM members produce hundreds of millions of products each year. They design and build products at the highest levels of quality and safety. As such, they have demonstrated their commitment to strong internal safety design, monitoring, and evaluation/failure analysis systems. Together with industry design practices, test requirements, and redundant safety mechanisms PFAS chemicals play an important role in the safety profile of household appliances in their great resistance to high temperatures.

The legislation would specifically prohibit the sale of many products including cleaning products and cookware which contain PFAS in 2025 and all other products containing intentionally added PFAS in 2032. Among the issues with this legislation is the broad grouping of PFAS substances. The definition of PFAS in the bill includes possibly 10,000 substances, which should not be treated as a single class.

AHAM has conducted a member survey in a good faith effort to determine the extent to which PFAS is used in home appliances. AHAM members indicated portable and major kitchen appliances contain PFAS chemicals but in trace amounts, ranging from as low as 0.001 to 0.07 lbs. per unit. In almost all cases, the use of PFAS was confined to internal components and parts, such as bolts and washers, plastic brackets, and wire terminals with no direct exposure to consumers during use. This material is added during the manufacturing process, which reduces the potential for any consumer exposure during use or transmission to the environment.

It is also extremely important to consider potential alternatives with any restrictions. In some instances, such as in front load washers, the ball bearings which sustain the stainless steel basket are a very critical structural parts where PFAS is present and there are no other viable solutions at the moment. Another important thing to consider is that appliance manufacturers employ a complex, global supply chain for thousands of models with hundreds of thousands of components, often involving multi-tiered suppliers located on multiple continents. Gathering detailed information on any given chemical, let alone a chemical class as broad as PFAS, is extremely difficult even for one given year.

Another concern with the bill is the potential inclusion of hydrofluoroolefin (HFO) refrigerants and foam blowing agents, as they may be implicated based on the bill's definition of PFAS chemicals. HFOs are one of the more climate friendly alternatives for use as refrigerator insulation foam blowing agents. HFC blends also are climate friendly alternatives as refrigerants in room air conditioners, portable air conditioners and dehumidifiers. In fact, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) encouraged and effectively drove a transition to these and other low global warming potential (GWP) foam blowing agents and refrigerants through ozone depletion and climate focused phase outs of CFC's, HCFC's, and HFC compounds. These chemicals were approved under EPA's Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP) program, which

included an environmental review.<sup>[1]</sup> Ultimately, the use of such a broad definition could needlessly impose new requirements on products and technologies deemed safe and environmentally beneficial.

Presently, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is undertaking the task directed by their legislature for similar reporting structure. Despite having over a year to construct a rule-making, they have yet to formalize it while the first reporting requirement has already passed. Last year, the Governor of California vetoed similar legislation in part because the EPA “is currently undergoing rulemaking to require reporting of PFAS.” The EPA has implemented a PFAS Action Plan that has served as a roadmap for the agency’s activities addressing PFAS chemicals. AHAM urges the Legislature to avoid additional state-level reporting requirements and duplicate the EPA’s efforts to identify PFAS substances. Thank you for the opportunity to present this written statement to the hearing record.

AHAM represents more than 150 member companies that manufacture 90% of the major, portable and floor care appliances shipped for sale in the U.S. Home appliances are the heart of the home, and AHAM members provide safe, innovative, sustainable and efficient products that enhance consumers’ lives. In Minnesota, the home appliance industry is a significant and critical segment of the economy. The total economic impact of the home appliance industry to Minnesota is \$3.6 billion, more than 20,000 direct and indirect jobs, \$468.5 million in state tax revenue, and more than \$1.2 billion in wages. The home appliance industry, through its products and innovation, is essential to consumer lifestyle, health, safety and convenience. Home appliances also are a success story in terms of energy efficiency and environmental protection.

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<sup>[1]</sup> See Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: Listing of Substitutes Under the Significant New Alternatives Policy Program, Final Rule at 86 Fed. Reg. 24444.