



## SB 246 / HB 2506 weakens drinking water protections.

It allows more of the most harmful toxins to human health to be dumped into drinking water supplies.

*What does SB 246 / HB 2506 change?*

**It increases the amount of toxic pollutants discharged by industrial sites.** To calculate permit limits, “critical design flow” is used to determine the amount of pollution a stream can hold without posing a threat to human health. It proposes to force permit writers to use a much higher critical design flow, harmonic mean (see reverse side), instead of the flow that has been used for years. Permits would be based on the assumption that rivers are larger and have additional dilution available, which is not the case. ***Reject changes to the critical design flow that will allow permittees to discharge more toxins and cancer-causing chemicals in our waters.***

**It allows more toxic dischargers to locate closer together and closer to drinking water intakes.**

“Mixing zones” are currently used in the permitting process to give leeway to use dilution as a way to discharge toxins in higher amounts. But current rules are carefully designed to prevent multiple industrial sites from discharging in close vicinity and to protect drinking water sources from these toxins. ***Reject removing mixing zone protections that are essential for controlling the concentration of harmful toxins in our rivers and keeping dischargers far away from our drinking water intakes.***

*Why increase toxins in our water?*

**Allowing more toxins in our water is not attractive for the state’s image or economic future.**

Perceptions of West Virginia are already negative when it comes to protecting water – a lax regulatory culture, catastrophic spills, unsafe drinking water, discolored streams, fish consumption advisories, raw sewage and littered streams paint a bleak picture. People want to raise families where drinking water safety is a priority and clean water is there for their children to enjoy. ***Increasing toxins in our water sends the wrong message.***

**No data or examples are available to show that weakening water protections will increase jobs.**

West Virginia needs clean water and economic opportunities that support long-term prosperity. There is no evidence these changes will meet our needs for advancing economic growth. West Virginia should take pride in clean water as one of its most valuable assets. ***Increasing toxins in our water does not promise a pay-off, it only promises we will have more pollution threatening the health of our people.***