Subject: Priorities for Per- and Polyfluoroalkylated Substances (PFAS) to Support Efforts by Regions, States and other Federal Agencies

Background:

- Per- and polyfluoroalkylated substances (PFAS) are a large family of man-made, globally-distributed chemicals that include perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS)
    - PFAS—primarily PFOA and PFOS, but also others—have been used widely in consumer products, firefighting foams, and in industrial processes
    - PFAS are persistent in the environment
    - There is substantial concern about the effects of PFAS on public health
- PFAS have been detected at sites across the country, often in drinking water or potential drinking water sources
    - There have been contamination issues across the country, including in EPA Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10
    - There have also been known, or suspected, contamination issues with at least 75 Department of Defense (DoD) Federal Facility National Priority List (NPL) sites, as well as other regional locations
- EPA is working with federal partners, states, tribes, communities, and industry to address public concerns related to PFAS, including PFOS and PFOA
    - States, tribes, and local governments are concerned about:
        - The wide variety of PFAS with limited hazard information, including the potential cumulative hazard for multiple PFAS
        - The environmental persistence of PFAS
        - The limited information as to the occurrence of PFAS in the environment due to the lack of validated analytical methods, and laboratory capacity
    - The public is concerned about:
        - The nature and extent of exposure to PFAS
        - The potential human health effects that PFAS exposures could impart, particularly on the fetus and young children
        - What the government is doing to remediate and reduce contamination levels in their environment

Senior leaders from across EPA (ORD; OW; OLEM; OCSPP; Regions 1, 3, and 4) recommend that EPA focus on the following priorities areas, allowing EPA to best support efforts by Regions, States, and other Federal agencies:

1. <u>Addressing public concerns and informing Superfund clean-ups by filling data gaps related to human health exposure and toxicity.</u>

    Current EPA activities include:

    - Characterizing human health hazards of PFAS, including PFOA and PFOS as well as up to 30 data-poor PFAS (Cross-Agency)

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- Conducting research using new, alternative methods (e.g., computational toxicology modeling) to study the potential hazards of data-poor PFAS in the environment (ORD)
- Conducting research on analytical methods to better understand human exposure to PFAS in the environment (Cross-Agency)

2. Establishing a group of approved laboratory methods for measuring the amount of PFAS in different environmental media and human samples. Accurate measurements are critical for establishing hazard levels and determining risk.

   Current EPA activities include:
   - Developing and validating analytical methods to measure PFAS in water and soil (Cross-Agency)
   - Developing data quality guidelines for analytical methods (Cross-Agency)
   - Identifying and addressing federal, state and commercial laboratory capacity issues (Regions)

3. Reducing PFAS exposures and cleaning up contaminated sites by limiting production of hazardous PFAS chemicals before people are exposed or the chemicals are released into the environment, and assisting states and federal partners in the remediation of environmental media.

   Current EPA activities include:
   - Ensuring safety and review of pre-market alternatives for PFOA and PFOS in EPA's New Chemical program (OCSPP)
   - Actively engaging in PFAS clean-up processes at Federal Facility and private National Priority List (NPL) sites (OLEM)
   - Significant regional involvement in PFAS hotspots across the country

4. Improving risk communication efforts to ensure the accurate and timely communication of information to the public, and other partners (e.g. local governments, tribes, industry).

   Current EPA activities include:
   - Working across the Agency and with states, tribes, local, and federal partners to address communication concerns of PFAS contamination of public water systems, private drinking water wells, and legacy contamination at Superfund sites (Regions)
   - Maintaining a centralized internet landing site with links to EPA PFAS activities (OPA)
   - Working with Environmental Council of States (ECOS) and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) on a pilot project on communicating risks of PFAS (Cross-Agency)

Recommended Action by Administrator Pruitt: EPA, through the Administrator, form a partnership with the National Governor's Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices to work with state leadership to ensure that EPA is supporting and meeting state needs with regards to PFAS contamination issues.

Next Steps:
- The EPA Cross-Agency PFAS Coordination Committee, led by the Office of the Science Advisor, will continue to coordinate ongoing Agency PFAS-related activities to ensure that EPA's efforts are focused and non-duplicative.
- The Committee will continue to work with ECOS to ensure that the priorities identified above meet state needs and to identify products that will be useful for states.
- The Committee will check in with the Administrator, or his designee, periodically.