

TURA Advisory Committee Meeting, January 16, 2025

Meeting Attendees

Committee members

Chris Christuk, Transene
Michael Fiore, MA Dept. of
Labor Standards
Andy Goldberg, AGO
Bill Judd, ICG
Ted Karavedas, Dupont
Tennis Lilly, Groundwork
Lawrence
Wismelda Perez-Garcia, City
of Lawrence
Kayla Powers, Clean
Production Action
Chuck Shepard, S.E. Shires
Laura Spark, Clean Water
Action

TURA Administrative Council

Stephanie Cooper, EEA

TURA program

Lynn Cain, DEP
Richard Blanchet, DEP
Dan Burstein, DEP
Rebecca Dolan, DEP
Leoni Desai, DEP

Rebecca Mulrean, EEA

Caredwen Foley, OTA
Jack Illingworth, OTA
Kari Sasportas, OTA
Tiffany Skogstrom, OTA
Elisheva Thoreen, OTA

Baskut Tuncak, TURI
Colin Hannahan, TURI
Hayley Hudson, TURI
Heather Tenney, TURI
Gabriel Salierno, TURI

Other attendees

Carol Holahan
Christina Bramante
Dawn Horter
Elizabeth Harriman
Gene Ricciardelli
Jerome Lang
Katherine Robertson
Raza Ali

Minutes

Introductions and Welcome

Executive Director Tiffany Skogstrom welcomed the Advisory Committee and called the roll of attendees.

Approval of October 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Chris Christuk moved to accept the meeting minutes from October 17, 2024. Chuck Shepard seconded. Members voted unanimously by roll call to accept the minutes.

Nine PFAS added to US EPA Toxics Release Inventory (TRI)

The Chair noted the addition of nine PFAS to the TRI, and explained that a regulatory amendment will be proposed to add these to the TURA list as well. EPA has also recently proposed to add 16 individual PFAS and 15 PFAS categories to the list. EPA also removed the de minimis reporting exemption for PFAS. Seven PFAS had previously been added to TRI and have also been added to TURA for RY 2025.

TURA Program Carbon Nanotubes and Carbon Nanofibers

TURI staff provided an update on the potential addition of multi- and single-walled carbon nanotubes (MWCNTs and SWCNTs) and carbon nanofibers to the TURA list. Staff gave an overview of policy analysis elements, including the SAB recommendation, sources being used to identify potential users, and regulations in other jurisdictions pertaining to carbon nanotubes and nanofibers. Staff stated that there are only a few facilities, so far, that would be required to report these chemicals. Staff then discussed considerations for evaluating the suitability of a lower threshold.

A member added a comment that the existing thresholds are not applicable because nanomaterials are not used in the thousands of pounds, and stated that while the EU minimum threshold is lower (1 ton), REACH is also not procuring information about what is being used.

A member asked about worker safety standards for workers handling nanofibers and materials. Program staff responded that the NIOSH recommendation is based on an 8-hour day over a 40-year worker lifetime. The SAB relied on the NIOSH information during their review, but it is challenging to translate this into an annual TURA reporting threshold. Program staff stated that the TRI policy analysis goes into more detail regarding worker health and safety.

A member asked about the timeline for developing the policy analysis. TURI staff stated that they are continuing to refine it based on thoughts of Committee and Council members, while considering this threshold issue.

A member asked about whether nanomaterials are used in loose form or encapsulated in a solution. TURI staff replied that they might be used in either form.

A member asked a question about some recent OTA work about PFAS identification.

Comments were invited from attendees, but no additional questions were raised.

TURA Fees Background and Status

The Chair gave a brief introduction to the next topic before ceding the chair to the Executive Director for the remainder of the meeting, as the Undersecretary had to leave the meeting.

The Executive Director presented some background on the consideration of a potential fee increase, including the statutory obligation to adjust fees with PPI; the history of fee increase considerations; and the fiscal benefits of source reduction. She also summarized discussion at the last Administrative Council meeting.

A member noted that a 50% increase all in one year would be onerous, particularly for smaller companies, and would suggest spreading an increase out over multiple years, and also reaffirmed that reducing the administrative burden would be welcome.

A member asked for a summation of how the program arrived at this point, including the drop in revenue and the expansion of the program's scope. The Executive Director noted that fees were not on the agenda for many years, but expressed the intention of keeping them on the agenda at least annually now.

A member offered a reply, and gave some background on the 2006 amendments. He noted that a large percentage of filers exited the program as a result of the 2006 amendments. This caused a substantial drop in program revenue. Fee increases were then put off; the recession postponed consideration of fee increases further. The program is going to need increases, and those should be spread out over multiple years to mitigate impacts on filers.

A member acknowledged there is a perception that Massachusetts has regulations unfriendly to business, but that he does not think this is a legitimate concern for the TURA program, given the way fees have not kept up with inflation. We want businesses to thrive, and we need to improve public and environmental health, which is not in opposition.

A member expressed surprise that the 2014 amendment got so close to promulgation, and that a decade then went by. Can this body recommend action on this statutory obligation within this calendar year, so that we can spread out an increase over multiple years?

Comments from attendees were invited.

A trade group representative reiterated her group's position, which is that fee discussion should include larger reforms to the program, alongside expansion of the TURA universe. Absent reform and universe expansion, fee increases are unsustainable. Her organization does not oppose an increase tied to the PPI, which would have been gradual and predictable, and would propose incorporating those annual increases.

TURA Program Update

Program staff provided an update on program activities, including reduction of PFAS and halogenated solvents; safer cleaning and disinfection; environmental justice and TURA; the implementation of the MA flame retardants law; trainings and education; staffing changes; and the TURA information release.

A member asked for clarification about data shared in the information release.

A member asked if the number of filers has decreased over the years. DEP staff responded that the number has decreased.

A member also spoke to recognize the contributions of Jim Cain, recently retired from OTA, and the helpfulness and confidentiality of OTA's services.

Adjourn