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[AirTalk with Larry Mantle](#)

As California looks to ban non-stick cookware, not everyone is pleased

To stick or not to stick? That is the question at the heart of California Senate Bill 682, which recently passed in the House and the legislature. The bill, if signed by Governor Gavin Newsom, would ban the sale and distribution of certain products that contain PFAS, also known as “forever chemicals.” That ban would include products like food packaging, dental floss, and perhaps most contentiously, nonstick cookware, which contains a forever chemical known as PTFE, which gives cookware their slick, water-repellant surfaces. But at what cost? The cookware industry says fluoropolymers, which is the more specific chemical used in cookware, isn’t a concern to human health or the environment. Scientists are skeptical. Is there a compromise to be found? Joining us for this conversation is Kevin Messner, senior vice president of public affairs at Group SEB, a company that produces cookware and one of the founding companies of the Cookware Sustainability Alliance, a cookware safety and sustainability organization as well as Jamie DeWitt, a professor of environmental and molecular toxicology at Oregon State University.

The show discussed SB682 focusing on non-stick cookware. There were two guests on the show. Kevin Messner with cookware company Groupe SEB and Jamie DeWitt with Oregon State University College of Agricultural Science (Environmental and Molecular Toxicology). Professor DeWitt was quoted in the New York Times [article](#) (Sept. 12, 2025).

Summary

Larry Mantle asked about the health and science of PFAS – Professor spoke about the health impacts of the harmful PFAS.

Messner responded that harmful POFAS are acidic and are completely different in their chemical properties than PTFE and fluoropolymers, which do not have those health impacts.

Professor DeWitt focused on the production phase of PTFE and the chemical producers processing aids. **“While an individual consumer might not experience significant exposure [to harmful PFAS] from using their non-stick cookware . . .”**

The alternatives were discussed. Messner said that alternatives cost more (couple thousand dollars of the life of the cookware) and do not last as long. A chef, who called in, said she likes to use carbon steel, but Larry Mantle asked about the weight of the steel pans. The chef said it is true that they weigh more. Also, Larry Mantle pointed out that chefs use different oils are you able to avoid using oils. The chef said, yes, you do have to use some type of lubrication.

Larry Mantle asked about the production of PTFE. Messner responded that SB682 does not solve the problems with harmful PFAS emissions during the production of PTFE. In fact, the chemical producers do not oppose the bill and some actually support the bill. Further, Messner stated that cookware is less than a percentage of the production so not enough to drive any changes and banning something that is safe is not the right policy direction.