



MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Improving Enforcement of Connecticut's Pesticide Regulations

HB 5999- An Act Concerning Pesticide Regulation in Connecticut

BACKGROUND

According to a 2017 report by the CT Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), inspections and enforcement for pesticide use in our state have fallen to a 15 year low. This has impeded the pesticide program's ability to monitor the use of toxic pesticides across the state, to analyze available data, and enforce state law when violations occur. The statistics demonstrate that enforcement actions taken by DEEP to prevent undue exposures and misuse of pesticides are insufficient, highlighting a need for meaningful action by the legislature to ensure improved compliance and enforcement regarding the use of toxic pesticides.

According to CEQ, per-capita illnesses related to exposure to toxic pesticides in CT exceeds that of our neighboring states. This suggests that more needs to be done to protect public health from exposure to pesticides and other toxic chemicals. This means increasing funding for pesticide inspections and enforcement, and clearing the way for municipalities to take their own actions to reduce pesticide use. The statistics demonstrate that enforcement actions taken by DEEP to prevent undue exposures and misuse of pesticides are insufficient, highlighting a need for meaningful action by the legislature to ensure improved compliance and enforcement regarding the use of toxic pesticides.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS

- Creating a *dedicated pesticide program fund*—funded through pesticide registration and product certification fees to cover the costs of regulating pesticides, including inspection and enforcement activities. Currently, revenue collected through the various registration fees and enforcement activities (approximately \$3 million annually) are deposited in the General Fund.
- Implement an electronic reporting and record keeping system for pesticide permits, certifications, and registrations; to improve the state's ability to access and analyze pesticide data, as well as making it easier to make data regarding pesticide use available to the public.
- Reinstate the environmental monitoring program to monitor pesticides present in our soil and water resources, while providing DEEP with the information it needs to improve enforcement and remediation efforts.
- Close on-line purchasing loopholes for restricted-use pesticides (currently, uncertified persons are able to purchase pesticides from out of state via the web, without the proper certifications required by law to purchase and use them in Connecticut).

CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS HB 5999- IMPROVING PESTICIDE ENFORCEMENT IN CONNECTICUT

Citizens Campaign for the Environment is an 80,000 member non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization that works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment.

March, 2019