



BEYOND PESTICIDES PRESS RELEASE

Protecting Health and the Environment with Science, Policy, and Action

For Immediate Release

Press inquiries contact:

Drew Toher, Beyond Pesticides, (202) 543-5450, dtoher@beyondpesticides.org

Jay Feldman, Beyond Pesticides, (202) 255-4296, JFeldman@beyondpesticides.org

Jason Davidson, Friends of the Earth, (202) 222-0738, jdavidson@foe.org

Shaye Skiff, Friends of the Earth, (202) 222-0723, kskiff@foe.org

Over 115 Local Officials Ask Congress to Reject Federal Preemption of Local Authority on Pesticides in the Farm Bill

Washington, DC, April 26, 2023 — Today, more than 115 local officials [sent a letter](#) to Congress urging the rejection of any language in the 2023 Farm Bill that would limit local government authority to regulate toxic pesticides. If included, such language would overturn decades of precedent set by the Supreme Court and harm the ability of communities to safeguard the health of their residents and unique local ecology.

This letter is a response to ongoing attempts by the pesticide industry to incorporate the language of [HR7266](#), introduced last session by former Representative Rodney Davis (R-IL), into the upcoming Farm Bill. The Farm Bill conference committee rejected similar efforts by the pesticide industry during 2018 Farm Bill deliberations. Local officials are urging the House and Senate Agriculture Committees to produce a clean Farm Bill that does not undermine the authority of local communities wishing to protect public health and the environment. The letter has been signed by 118 elected officials in 62 communities from 20 states and the District of Columbia.

"This fight is about more than toxic pesticides," said **Drew Toher, community resource and policy director with Beyond Pesticides**. "It's about local democracy. The letter acknowledges that not every local lawmaker may support action on pesticides, but they strongly oppose forfeiting the authority to protect their constituent's health and wellbeing."

"Our democratically elected leaders are keenly aware of the threat pesticides pose to our communities, while the pesticide industry wants a free pass to poison us," said **Jason Davidson, Senior Food and Agriculture Campaigner with Friends of the Earth**. "We must not let corporations take away our right to protect ourselves. Congress must put the health of people and the planet over corporate profits and stop Big Ag's latest power grab."

Local officials added the following:

Mayor Daniel Biss, City of Evanston, IL: “It is critical that local governments have tools to protect the health of our residents and safeguard our environment. The federal government should not tie the hands of local lawmakers aiming to address ongoing crises relating to health, biodiversity and climate change. Congress should be expanding the authorities available to local governments to address these concerns, not limiting them.”

<https://www.cityofevanston.org/government/mayor>

Mayor Aaron Brockett, City of Boulder, CO: "There is increasing scientific evidence showing that pesticides harm human health, threaten biodiversity and weaken the natural systems upon which human survival depends. Local governments need to be given the ability to make decisions about how to best protect their community, their children, and the natural world from these toxic substances." <https://bouldercolorado.gov/person/aaron-brockett>

Councilwoman Sara Continenza, South Euclid, OH: “As Councilwoman in South Euclid Ohio, I am opposed of any sort of preemption of home rule, particularly as it relates to the ability of municipalities to regulate chemicals that are dangerous to our health, our environment, and our communities. In South Euclid, we passed an ordinance banning pesticides on public property due to the extensive evidence of the harm it causes. There are extensive options for natural products and practices that can regulate pests and fungi without causing harmful green algae blooms in our lakes or creating toxic hazards to humans and pets. Our environment is already struggling with the toxicity caused by industry, the train derailment in East Palestine, and more. We need to be doing whatever we can to clean up our environment, not further toxify it. Please oppose the federal pesticide preemption in the 2023 Farm Bill — this preemption only further damages our environment and trust in our government.”

<https://cityofsoutheuclid.com/citycouncil/>

###

About Beyond Pesticides

Beyond Pesticides is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., which works with allies in protecting health and the environment with science, policy, and action to lead the transition to a world free of toxic pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. Learn more at www.beyondpesticides.org