

Dec. 18, 2017

Dear Mayor and Councilors,

Thank you for considering a pesticide ordinance mandating organic land care. The exposure to toxic chemicals in our food, air and water is at an all-time high, as is associated chronic disease. As health professionals, it is our contention based on the molecular and microbiologic actions of these synthetic land care pesticides that the continued use of them must be challenged, banned, and replaced by practices and products that are not harmful to people and the environment.

We appreciate the time and thought that has gone into drafting the legislation before the Council. We the undersigned urge you to SUPPORT this pesticide ordinance and to vote in FAVOR of amendments to strengthen it, including:

- * Add back the South Portland golf course restriction limited to “tees and greens.”
- * Remove the too broad invasive insect exemption.
- * Increase to 4 the number of people on the Pest Management Advisory Committee(PMAC) with organic credentials.
- * Increase the waterbody setback from 75 to 250 feet to match Shoreland Zoning.
- * Allow abutters to appeal waivers for prohibited pesticide use on neighboring property.

All of the above amendments will further protect the public and strengthen the oversight process.

We urge you to vote AGAINST the six proposed staff amendments that would:

- * Remove the public from the process of evaluating wavier requests.
- * Delay the start date to 2019.

- * Extend the current 3-year deadline for athletic fields to transition from prohibited pesticides to organic land care.
- * Allow prohibited herbicides to be used on invasive plants.
- * Remove the requirement that the city staffer assigned to the PMAC maintain organic land care credentials.
- * Make the ordinance sunset in 2023.

None of the staff amendments promote public health and all would allow Portland residents and visitors to be exposed to high risk toxic substances. As health care providers, we urge you to protect public health and support the ordinance with strengthened amendments. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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