



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

September 7, 2018

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
United States House of Representatives  
233 Cannon H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Pelosi:

We, the undersigned members of the Montgomery County Council, urge you to oppose the proposed amendment to section 24(a) of FIFRA (7 U.S.C. 136v(a)) in the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018, i.e., Farm Bill, which would preempt state and local laws that protect the public's health and the environment.

If the House version of the bill is enacted, it will have far-reaching effects on the ability of local governments to respond to emerging public health threats. In recent years, a growing number of communities, including ours, have taken a leading role to update our pesticide use laws to reflect the latest scientific information regarding the potential health effects of these toxic chemicals.

A rapidly growing body of evidence links pesticides to a wide range of diseases and conditions including Parkinson's disease, diabetes, leukemia, lymphoma, lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, dementia, reproductive dysfunction, Alzheimer's disease, and variety of cancers including breast, colon, prostate and lung cancer. Recognizing these risks, many communities have passed progressive policies to restrict the use of pesticides and protect our residents before any harm comes to them.

In 2015, the Montgomery County Council enacted landmark legislation to curb the cosmetic use of toxic pesticides on private property in order to protect the health and well-being of families and the environment. In its current state, the Farm Bill would have precluded our ability to even consider such legislation. Moreover, it would establish a troubling precedent for the ability of local governments to safeguard residents on vital health and safety issues.

In these times when environmental regulations are being recklessly rolled back by the president and his EPA, state and local governments can play an important role in filling the void. In the absence of progress at the federal level, citizens are increasingly

turning to their city or county councils to address issues that are critical to the future of our planet. As local elected officials, we have our pulse on our communities, and as such are able to respond more rapidly to the constituents we represent. If Congress restricts the authority of state and local governments on these matters, it will seriously jeopardize our environment and put vulnerable individuals at an increased risk of exposure.

For the sake of our environment, public health and local autonomy, we call on you and your colleagues in the House to reject this dangerous provision.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



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Hans Riemer  
President



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Nancy Navarro  
Vice President



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George Leventhal



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Marc Elrich



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Tom Hucker



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Nancy Floreen



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Sidney Katz

cc: Senator Chris Van Hollen  
Senator Ben Cardin  
Congressman Steny Hoyer  
Congressman Jamie Raskin  
Congressman John Sarbanes  
Congressman John Delaney