

May 30, 2012

Dear Member of Provincial Parliament,

Oppose Bill 88, Pesticides Amendment Act (Licence for Cosmetic Purposes), 2012

We ask you to **vote against Bill 88**, which would amend the Pesticides Act to reintroduce banned lawn and garden chemicals. Ontario's world-class cosmetic pesticide ban, as it now stands, protects both human health and the environment. We fully support maintaining a comprehensive ban on the sale and cosmetic use of pesticides.

Since the legislation came into effect in 2009,

- 1) Concentrations in urban streams of lawn chemicals such as 2,4-D, Dicamba and MCPP, were **reduced** by up to 97%.ⁱ and,
- 2) The third review of the health effects of pesticides, released in May of this year by Ontario College of Family Physicians, reconfirms that pesticides are harmful to reproductive and respiratory systems and neurodevelopmental behaviour.ⁱⁱ

The landmark Supreme Court of Canada ruling on *Spraytech vs Hudson*, Quebec in 2001 upheld the concept of governments being able to apply the precautionary principle as "trustees of the environment".

Across the country, Canadians living in communities with pesticide bans have healthy, chemical-free lawns and gardens that are as beautiful as ever.

Please feel free to contact any of the undersigned health and environmental organizations:

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment www.cape.ca
Farrah Khan farrah@cape.ca 416-306-2273

Canadian Cancer Society – Ontario Division www.cancer.ca
Joanne Di Nardo - jdinardo@ontario.cancer.ca 416-323-7067

Canadian Environmental Law Association www.cela.ca
Kathleen Cooper kcooper@cela.ca 416-960-2284 ext. 221

David Suzuki Foundation www.davidsuzuki.org
Lisa Gue lgue@davidsuzuki.org 613-594-5428

EcoJustice www.ecojustice.ca
Justin Duncan jduncan@ecojustice.ca 416-368-7533 ext. 522

Environmental Defence www.environmentaldefence.ca
Rick Smith rsmith@environmentaldefence.ca 416-323-9521 ext.225

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada www.ldac-taac.ca/
Barbara McElgunn mcelgunnb@rogers.com 416-281-9676

Ontario College of Family Physicians

www.ocfp.on.ca/English/OCFP/Communications/CurrentIssues/Pesticides/

Jan Kasperski jk_ocfp@CFPC.CA 416-867-9646 ext. 27

Lynn Marshall lynn.marshall@utoronto.ca

Ontario Medical Association – Pediatrics Section

Dr. Hiro Yamashiro pedsontario@gmail.com

Pesticide Free Ontario www.pesticidefree.ca & www.pesticidereform.ca

Susan Koswan info@pesticidefree.ca 519-578-8508

Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario www.rnao.org

Kim Jarvi kjarvi@rnao.org 416-599-1925

Toronto Environmental Alliance torontoenvironment.org

Heather Marshall, Toxics Campaigner heather@torontoenvironment.org 416-596-0660

Please feel free to quote any of the following:

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment:

"Our doctors are appalled at Bill 88's proposal to weaken the most health-protective pesticide legislation in North America. Ontario's Cosmetic Pesticide Ban Act (2008) was based on a solid body of scientific data detailing the health impacts of pesticides, but today we know even more. The latest science from the Ontario College of Family Physicians links pesticide exposure to low birth weight, behavioural problems, lowered IQ, and lung disease. If any amount of spraying is permitted, it will risk the health of all Ontarians."

Canadian Cancer Society – Ontario Division:

"The Ontario Cosmetic Pesticide Ban Act is a significant way of engaging in the fight against cancer and we support it in its current form. Because of the Act, parents no longer worry about their children being exposed to cosmetic pesticides while playing in backyards, parks and schoolyards. We need to remember that the body of evidence suggests a positive association between exposure to certain pesticides and cancer. The Act has been successful. Let us leave it as is."

Canadian Environmental Law Association:

"Ontario's approach to banning the cosmetic use of pesticides is the culmination of over twenty years of effort that began with local pesticide bylaws that withstood multiple legal challenges up to and including the Supreme Court of Canada. That Court noted approval of the concepts of governments as "trustees of the environment" and applying the precautionary principle. Given the multiple challenges we face of ongoing pollution emissions, and a wide range of toxic substances in our air, food, water and in multiple consumer products, we should take every opportunity to minimize or eliminate exposures to toxic substances that are unnecessary and easily eliminated. The cosmetic use of pesticides falls squarely into this category and banning the use and sale of needless pesticides is an exemplary way to apply a precautionary approach."

EcoJustice:

"Ontario is currently the vanguard in the battle against needless pesticide use in North America. Bill 88 would set Ontario back years in the protection of family health in the province. Let's keep moving forward rather than backwards. Bill 88 should be rejected."

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada:

"The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC) supports a phase out, or ban, of non-essential uses of pesticides, and for use of alternative methods. This policy is based on the fact that children are more vulnerable to pesticides for a number of reasons, and that there are important toxicity data gaps regarding the safety of pesticides in developing systems, including neurological development".

Ontario College of Family Physicians:

"In 1999, 2004 and 2012, family physician researchers, associated with the Ontario College of Family Physicians and the six Ontario medical universities, have undertaken systematic reviews of the Pesticide literature on the impact of the environment on health. Each review provided more and more evidence to convince the family physicians of this province and across the country that a ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides was warranted. The public trusts family doctors more than they trust those who lobby for the pesticide industry. MPPs should do the same. Strike down Bill 88".

Ontario Medical Association – Pediatrics Section:

"The Pediatricians of Ontario were an early supporter of the cosmetic pesticide ban when the battle was being waged city council by city council and I was present at the news conference on Earth Day when Premier McGuinty announced this historic ban.

We would oppose any proposed changes to the current law, as it is important to maintain the safety of our most vulnerable citizens as the most important priority above all."

Pesticide Free Ontario:

"Pesticides are a threat to human health and the environment. Bill 88 is both regressive and harmful.

People throughout Ontario worked tirelessly for decades to ban the sale and use of cosmetic pesticides. At the time the Cosmetic Pesticides Ban Act was passed, the polls showed that more than 70% of Ontarians supported such a measure.

The success of Hudson, Quebec's twenty-year old bylaw and the City of Waterloo's decades old Integrated Plant Health Care Programme is concrete evidence that pesticides are not needed to maintain beautiful and healthy lawns and gardens."

Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario:

"New legislation to ban the cosmetic use of pesticides is reducing exposure to pesticides and improving health. It works. That's why the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario urges all parties to vote yes to health and no to Bill 88."

Toronto Environmental Alliance:

"The Toronto Environmental Alliance opposes Bill 88's proposed changes to Ontario's ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides. TEA was actively involved in the Toronto by-law to restrict the use of pesticides, which was passed almost a decade ago. We have even more proof now than we did back then to show the harmful impacts of toxic substances to human health and the environment. Many companies are providing environmentally friendly non-toxic products and services to Ontarians and we applaud them for their green business leadership. Not only are they protecting the natural environment and keeping their employees safe, they are protecting customers (and their neighbours) from harmful toxins. It makes no sense to weaken the pesticide ban after such meaningful progress has been made to protect our health and the environment."

ⁱ *Changes in Urban Stream Water Pesticide Concentrations One Year after a Cosmetic Pesticide Ban*, Aaron K, Todd, Environmental Monitoring and Reporting Branch Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Nov. 2010

ⁱⁱ *2012 Systematic Review of Pesticide Health Effects*, Marg Sanborn MD, CCFP, FCFP; Kate Bassil, MSc, PhD; Cathy Vakil, MD, CCFP, FCFP; Kathleen Kerr, MD, MCFP, Dip. Evn. Health; Kelsey Ragan, MPH; Ontario College of Family Physicians, 2012