



Date: February 12, 2020

Bill: HB 229 – Pesticides – Use of Chlorpyrifos - Prohibition

Position: Support

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Committee:

The National Aquarium respectfully requests a favorable report for **House Bill 229, Pesticides – Use of Chlorpyrifos – Prohibition**, which prohibits a person from using chlorpyrifos, a pesticide and a pollutant, in the State of Maryland.

Estuaries, including the Chesapeake Bay, serve as critical breeding grounds and nurseries for important marine species such as blue crabs, oysters, striped bass, sandbar sharks and Atlantic bottlenose dolphins. Yet the very dynamics that make estuaries ideal for marine life—their calm waters and flow from shallow tidal creeks—receive polluted runoff from agricultural fields and are susceptible to higher concentrations of pesticides.

Chlorpyrifos, specifically, is highly toxic to fish, aquatic invertebrates, estuarine and marine organisms, and marine environments, even at low concentrations.¹ It is estimated that Chlorpyrifos harms dozens of endangered species and critical habitats throughout the United States, including the Atlantic sturgeon and the Chesapeake Bay.²

Exposure to Chlorpyrifos is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Atlantic sturgeon, which is found in the Chesapeake Bay.³ Similarly, Chlorpyrifos pollutes the Bay by reducing prey species and harming water quality.⁴ It has been documented in over 90% of Chesapeake Bay water samples and 100% of fish tissue samples analyzed by the Chesapeake Bay Program.⁵ The Chesapeake Bay Program listed Chlorpyrifos among its “top five toxics of concern” in the Bay.

The National Aquarium’s mission is to *inspire conservation of the world’s aquatic treasures*. By passing HB 229, Maryland will protect vulnerable aquatic species and limit the pollutants harming the Bay. **We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report.**

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¹ US Environmental Protection Agency. (1989). *Registration Standard (Second Round Review) for the Registration of Pesticide Products Containing Chlorpyrifos*. Office of Pesticide Programs, US EPA, Washington, DC.

² National Marine Fisheries Service. (2017). *Biological Opinion on the Environmental Protection Agency’s Registration of Pesticides containing Chlorpyrifos, Diazinon, and Malathion*. Washington, D.C. <http://doi.org/10.7289/V5CJ8BQM>

³ National Marine Fisheries Service. (2017). *Biological Opinion on the Environmental Protection Agency’s Registration of Pesticides containing Chlorpyrifos, Diazinon, and Malathion*. Washington, D.C. <http://doi.org/10.7289/V5CJ8BQM>

⁴ National Marine Fisheries Service. (2017). *Biological Opinion on the Environmental Protection Agency’s Registration of Pesticides containing Chlorpyrifos, Diazinon, and Malathion*. Washington, D.C. <http://doi.org/10.7289/V5CJ8BQM>

⁵ Chesapeake Bay Program. (2006). *Prioritized Chesapeake Bay Organic Toxics of Concern Method and Assessment*. Annapolis, MD.