



# MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

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February 12, 2020

To: Environment and Transportation Committee  
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chairman, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.  
Re: Pesticides – Use of Chlorpyrifos – Prohibition -HB 229 – SUPPORT

Chairman Barve, Vice Chairman Stein, members of the Environment & Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before to you today. My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chairman of Maryland Votes for Animals. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our thousands of members across Maryland, I respectfully request that the Environment & Transportation Committee vote favorably for Pesticides – Use of Chlorpyrifos – Prohibition - HB 229.

This bill would ban the use of chlorpyrifos including insecticides and seeds treated with the chemical. It would also require the Department of Agriculture to use existing budget resources to educate farmers, crop advisors and pest applicators with pest management.

Chlorpyrifos is toxic to many species of birds including robins, grackles, pigeons, and Mallard ducklings. In addition to laying fewer eggs, the eggshells of those eggs laid by Mallards are thinner than normal, so fewer ducklings survive.

In addition to laying fewer eggs, the eggshells of those eggs laid by Mallards are thinner than normal, so fewer ducklings survive. DDT, which was banned in the US in 1972, was the subject of Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* exposed the hazards of DDT to people and wildlife, especially birds. Populations of bald eagles and other birds crashed when DDT thinned their eggs, killing their embryos.

DDT, a pesticide known for accumulating in food webs and persisting in soil and river sediment, was banned in the United States in 1972. Chlorpyrifos was invented as an alternative to the pesticide DDT – which itself was a substitute for toxic lead arsenate – and has become part of a pattern known as “regrettable substitution”.

This same contamination that occurred with DDT occurs when chlorpyrifos goes up the food chain in a process called bioaccumulation.

Originally banned at the federal level by the Obama Administration in 2017, the ban was reversed before it went into effect by the Trump Administration. This was despite the fact that in 2017 The US Fish and Wildlife Service found that chlorpyrifos was so toxic that it would “jeopardize the existence” of more than 1200 endangered species including including birds, fish, and other wildlife.

Hawaii, California, and New York have moved to phase out the use of chlorpyrifos and similar legislation is under consideration in Connecticut, Oregon and the State of Washington. Last year, a bill to ban chlorpyrifos in Maryland passed the House but stalled in the Senate. Let's make 2020 Maryland's year.

I thank for Vice Chairman Stein for sponsoring this bill, and urge a favorable report on HB 229.

*Let Kindness Reign, Vote Humane*

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