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Support SB 300: Pesticides - Use of Chlorpyrifos - Prohibition

What is chlorpyrifos? What does it do?

- Chlorpyrifos is a toxic pesticide derived from a nerve gas developed by Nazi Germany for use in World War II.
- The EPA banned most residential use of chlorpyrifos in 2000, but it is still widely used in the agricultural industry:
 - Used on food crops, like those frequently consumed by infants and young children, such as apples, strawberries, peaches and grapes
 - Used on golf course turf, sod farms, nursery production, wood products, and others
- Marylanders regularly come in contact with chlorpyrifos through residue on food and contaminated air and water.
- Chlorpyrifos acts by inhibiting an enzyme that is key to the proper development and functioning of the central nervous system and brain.

The issue:

- Chlorpyrifos poses a serious risk to public health:
 - Chlorpyrifos has been linked to autism, childhood cancers, ADHD and other neurodevelopmental issues for babies and children.
 - Children in utero are especially at high risk of exposure, which is associated with adverse birth defects.
 - A 2012 study by the University of California, Berkeley, found that 87% of umbilical-cord blood samples tested from newborn babies contained detectable levels of the pesticide.
 - The President of the American Academy of Pediatrics stated in 2017 that "*Exposures for babies are probably five times greater than its proposed 'safe' intake, and 11 to 15 times higher for toddlers and older children*" and urged that chlorpyrifos "*is unambiguously dangerous and should be banned from use.*"
 - Farmworkers who apply and mix the pesticide are at an increased risk for reproductive health problems even with maximum protective equipment.
 - Among 50 farm pesticides studied, chlorpyrifos was one of two found to be associated with higher risks of lung cancer among frequent pesticide applicators than among infrequent or non-users.

- Chlorpyrifos harms wildlife and the environment:
 - Chlorpyrifos is extremely damaging to wildlife, especially birds, fish and pollinators.
 - Federal scientists concluded chlorpyrifos poses a risk to about 1,800 critically threatened or endangered species.
 - Chlorpyrifos contributes to a staggering decline of pollinators because of its sub-lethal effect on bees.
 - The Chesapeake Bay Program report found chlorpyrifos in 90% of Bay samples with 40% having concentrations exceeding thresholds.
 - Studies have found that chlorpyrifos can have negative physiological, mutagenic, and sub-lethal effects on aquatic life.

Why do we need a law in Maryland to ban it?

- U.S. EPA scientists were unable to identify safe levels:
 - EPA scientists were unable to conclude that the risk from aggregate exposure to chlorpyrifos meets the applicable safety standard under Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (“Food Act”) in 2015 and again in 2016.
 - EPA issued proposed regulations to revoke all “tolerances” (i.e. permitted residues) for the pesticide in food in November 2015.
- EPA scientists recommended a complete ban, but the current administration refuses:
 - Surmounting evidence of chlorpyrifos toxicity led EPA experts to determine there was no safe way to use the chemical, so they recommended a ban.
 - Former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt denied the petition to ban chlorpyrifos.
 - As a result, numerous state attorneys general, including Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh, have filed suit against the EPA challenging its rule.
 - The states of Hawaii, New York, and California, as well as the European Union, have all banned the use of chlorpyrifos.
- Chlorpyrifos causes irreparable harm to the environment and human health and must be banned in Maryland.

What Does SB 300 Do?

- It prohibits the use of chlorpyrifos, including insecticides containing chlorpyrifos and seeds treated with chlorpyrifos.
- It requires the Department of Agriculture, with existing budgeted resources, to provide farmers, certified crop advisors, and pesticide applicators education and assistance relating to integrated pest management.
- SB 300 protects the environment and human health from the devastating effects of chlorpyrifos.

Additional Background Information:

- On February 6, 2020, Corteva Inc. (spinoff of Dow/Dupont) the largest manufacturer of chlorpyrifos announced it will stop producing chlorpyrifos by the end of the year, due to drop in sales; but Corteva is not the only manufacturer of chlorpyrifos.
- Unless there is a ban on chlorpyrifos, other companies are likely to continue making it.
- Corteva made this announcement the same day it became illegal to sell chlorpyrifos in California, and as numerous states move toward banning it.