

## **Testimony on behalf of The Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland**

**In Support of: SB 300—Maryland Chlorpyrifos Ban Bill**  
**Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee**  
**February 11, 2020**

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and Members of the Education, Health and Environment Committee.

My name is Sherry Locke, I am the President of the Amateur Gardeners Club, which is a founding member of the Garden Club of America (GCA) and a member of the Federated Garden Clubs of MD (FGCM), which I am representing. Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland is comprised of 99 garden clubs with 3,558 members divided into five districts located throughout the state, from the Eastern Shore to the mountains of Western Maryland.

The Garden Club of America holds that we can garden without toxic pesticides. We really only use pesticides as a last resort. While residential gardens are certainly not farms, golf courses or vineyards, gardeners also deal with pest pressures. We gardeners are additional proof that pest eradication can be accomplished without a brain-damaging pesticide like chlorpyrifos in the tool box.

I am here today on behalf of FGCM to strongly support Senate Bill 300. In my capacity as president of a garden club, I, along with other garden club presidents, advocate for a healthy environment. Gardeners know that we must work with nature. The growing demand for clean, healthy produce has increased the demand for no - or least toxic - pesticide use in farming and our food. Some farmers, golf courses, and vineyards in Maryland have already proven they can maintain crop production without using brain-damaging chlorpyrifos. In order for our gardens to grow, as with farms, we need the pollinators including - bees, butterflies, birds and insects. Gone are the days when we would routinely spray pesticides and herbicides without regard to the harm we were causing, as in the case with chlorpyrifos.

I am also a mother and grandmother. If I would not allow my children to play in fields or eat fruits sprayed with chlorpyrifos, why would I not want the same for other children?

You have been elected to protect the state of Maryland and all of its inhabitants – human, animal, fish, plants. Together we can make Maryland a healthy, vibrant state. We only have one earth; and as far as I know, it is the only habitable planet. We have been given a tremendous gift, let's not put it in the rubbish heap. I, and the Federated Garden Clubs of MD, urge you to pass Senate Bill 300.

Thank you.  
Sherry Locke