



Committee: Environment and Transportation
Testimony on: Agriculture - Use of Glyphosate - Prohibition HB 0472
Organization: WISE
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 3, 2021

The Maryland Legislative Coalition, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB0472. The bill will prohibit a person in the state from using glyphosate on or after October 21, 2022.

Glyphosate is a commonly used synthetic herbicide. It's the active ingredient in popular weed-control products like Roundup, Rodeo, and Pondmaster. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that 280 million pounds per year of glyphosate are applied in the United States on agricultural fields, roadsides, businesses, industrial sites, homes and public parks. Americans have applied 1.8 million tons of glyphosate since patented by Monsanto in 1974.

While glyphosate systemically kills weeds relatively quickly, it also binds tightly to soils and can persist for months in the ground. According to a U.S. Geological Survey study, glyphosate was found in 66 of 70 rivers and streams studied, as well as in 70 percent of rainfall samples. There are growing concerns about its persistence in the environment and the effects on wildlife and human health.

Glyphosate exposure can be direct because of application, or indirect because of persistence in the food chain. Trace amounts of glyphosate are found in a variety of food products, wine, beer and even in breast milk.

In 2015, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) identified glyphosate, as a probable human carcinogen. In 2019 the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics called for the ban of glyphosate worldwide.

The giant pharmaceutical company Bayer, which purchased the herbicide from Monsanto in 2018, has since agreed to pay \$10 billion in more than 100,000 lawsuits to plaintiffs who say the chemical harmed them, including allegations that it caused non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, while continuing to sell the product without adding warning labels about its safety.

A ban on glyphosate is gaining traction in countries around the world. In the US, counties, towns, and cities, including Los Angeles, Seattle, and Miami, and many others in California,

Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Washington State, and more, have banned glyphosate applications on public lands.

If glyphosate is deemed unsafe for public lands, private use should also be prohibited. We urge the committee to vote in favor of HB472 which bans its use in Maryland.