

March 8, 2023

To the honorable Chair Tabke and committee members,

My name is Bonnie Wirtz and I am submitting this testimony in support of HF 1130, a bill to grant communities more control over pesticide regulations that affect them personally, in this case, the ability to restrict pollinator toxic pesticides. I want to register my strong support for this bill.

In 2012, I was a victim of pesticide drift from a crop-dusting plane and was rushed to the hospital with acute symptoms that almost sent me into cardiac arrest. Over the last decade after this exposure, I have had to make sure that I'm very careful about my exposure to pesticides, especially chlorpyrifos, the organophosphate that I was exposed to. My family and I have experienced long term health impacts over the last ten years that are likely connected to this incident

Living in a rural area, my likelihood of being exposed to toxic pesticides was higher than it would be in a different community. Ultimately, I had to leave my home to ensure the safety of myself and my family. Many of our rural communities are in the same boat, and because of state preemption laws, can't pass legislation to restrict the use of any pesticides in their community, even if their risk or their specific needs around pesticides are different than the state at large. I believe that communities should be able to decide for themselves whether or not to take an extra step in protecting people and the environment from pesticides. Research increasingly shows that pesticides that are bad for pollinators are bad for people, too. I hope that you will take the step to remove the red tape and allow communities to choose for themselves whether they would like to be an area of higher protection for people and pollinators alike.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Wirtz
Saint Paul, MN