



9 March 2023

The Honorable Chairwoman Samantha Vang
Minnesota House Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: Please oppose HF 1130—Legislation that preempts statewide and federal regulation of pesticides.

Dear Chairwoman Vang, Vice-Chairwoman Pursell, and members of the Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee:

The Minnesota Pest Management Association (MPMA) is the primary trade group representing the structural pest management industry in Minnesota. Our member companies manage pests including rodents, ants, cockroaches, bed bugs, mosquitoes, spiders, stinging insects, termites, and other pests in countless commercial, residential, and institutional settings.

Approximately 97% of pest control companies in Minnesota are small businesses.

As an essential workforce protecting Minnesota's public health, safety, and property, we feel that HF 1130, which in part has the well-intended goal of protecting pollinator health, would unintentionally make it difficult for pest management professionals to effectively do their work.

We are concerned about HF 1130 as written. Since 1987, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has responsibly regulated the sale and use of pesticides as the sole regulatory authority over pesticide application in Minnesota. Minnesota is one of 46 states across the nation that has this statutory preemption over local authorities. The MDA has professionals on staff to regulate and enforce Minnesota's pesticide laws. Our members are licensed by the MDA and, if found to be misusing pesticides, face fines, loss of their licenses, and other disciplinary actions – unlike the everyday homeowner, who can purchase and use these pesticides with no oversight.

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) grants individual states the authority to license, train and regulate pesticide applicators, and to set certain statewide policies on pesticide registration and use. By contrast, HF 1130 would allow all of Minnesota's cities to usurp the authority of MDA and make their own rules pertaining to pesticide use. Consequently, those cities would lose the guidance and supervision of the professionals and scientists that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture rely upon to create science-based pesticide policy across all states. The result of this would be a confusing patchwork of local jurisdictions, each with its own regulations.

The average pest control service technician makes between 8 and 10 service visits per day across multiple local jurisdictions. Even small companies with a single owner-operator will be



challenged to comply with the various regulations as they typically cover a 60-mile radius (over 11,000 sq. miles). If every jurisdiction had its own arbitrary rules, prohibitions and exemptions, the lack of uniformity would create an unnecessary burden affecting the ability of pest management professionals to safeguard public health and protect property from pest infestations. Additionally, pests like mosquitoes, ticks, and rodents do not abide by jurisdictional boundaries, so varying regulations in one town might conflict with those in place in adjacent communities. Compliance with such a jumble of regulations would be nearly impossible.

Another concern the structural pest management industry in Minnesota faces is that **HF 1130 would eliminate our industry's ability to apply pesticides around building foundations, even though structural pest control uses are unlikely to impact pollinators:** The structural pest management industry utilizes neonicotinoids to control infestations in homes, food service and food processing facilities, schools and daycare centers, hospitals, senior care facilities and hotels. These insecticides are effective and useful in protecting residential, commercial and institutional facilities from bed bugs, cockroaches, rodents, and various other pest infestations. Applicators read and follow EPA-approved label directions to ensure that their applications are effective and do not cause any adverse environmental harm. Due to the nature of our applications both indoors and in close proximity to structures, our industry is unlikely to pose a threat to pollinators. A recent [Cornell University study](#) on neonicotinoid pesticides has found that structural pest control applicators pose “**negligible risk to pollinators,**” and concludes that “[s]uch applications are unlikely to lead to substantial exposure for insect pollinators.”

MPMA stresses that the impact that the structural pest management industry has on pollinators is minimal; however, HF 1130 as written does not reflect this reality. MPMA members support, train for, and implement [Best Management Practices \(BMPs\)](#) developed by the National Pest Management Association, which helps to ensure that applicators use pesticides safely, in a manner that doesn't impact pollinators.

We ask that HF 1130 be amended, with language similar to that used in many other states' pesticide regulations (e.g., NJ) to allow for indoor treatments and outdoor treatments for pests within 7 feet of a structure.

We applaud the efforts of your committee to make determinations about the regulation of pesticides in our state to protect pollinators. However, HF 1130 as written would prevent the structural pest management industry from doing routine safety services in our communities under the oversight of MDA and the United States EPA. **MPMA respectfully asks that you do not support HF 1130 unless amended.** We would welcome and gladly answer any questions you may have about our concerns.

Respectfully,

THE MEMBER FIRMS OF THE MINNESOTA PEST MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
minnpest1@gmail.com