



3/9/2023

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: HF 1130—Allowing Local Regulation of Pesticides Will Lead to Unintended Consequences and Put Minnesotans at Risk – NPMA Opposes

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

The National Pest Management Association (NPMA), founded in 1933, is the only national trade group representing the structural pest control industry with over 5,000 members from around the world. We are proud to represent a multitude of small businesses through our members; over 80% have an annual revenue of less than \$1 million. We appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts on HF 1130, as we want to be constructive in the policymaking process. **Also, we commend the legislature’s efforts to protect the health of residents and pollinators in Minnesota.**

The professional structural pest management industry and our certified commercial applicators, operators, and technicians use pesticide products in, on, and around structures to protect public health and property. Our industry professionally manages a wide range of structural pests with these products that include ants, bedbugs, mosquitos, and termites, among many other pests. Our member companies take pride in their role as protectors of public health, food, and property extremely seriously and welcome further dialogue on this topic. We wish to work alongside the legislature to ensure thoughtful, science-based regulation wins the day.

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has responsibly regulated the sale and use pesticides as the sole regulative authority of pesticide application in Minnesota since 1987. 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 misusing pesticides, face fines, losing their licenses, and other disciplinary actions, unlike the everyday homeowner, who can purchase and use these pesticides with no oversight. **Undercutting the existing science-based regulatory framework would have a negative impact on the health and safety of all Minnesotans as well as residential, agricultural, and commercial spaces.**

This bill would allow all of Minnesota's cities to usurp the authority of MDA, along with the guidance and supervision of their professional staff and scientists in our field, creating a patchwork of regulation. **The average service technician conducts between 8 to 10 services per day across multiple jurisdictions.** If every jurisdiction had its own arbitrary prohibitions and exemptions, the lack of uniformity creates an unnecessary burden on the ability of pest management professionals to safeguard public health and property from pest infestations. Additionally, pests like mosquitos, ticks, and rodents do not abide by jurisdictional boundaries, so these varying regulations in one town might increase pest pressures on adjacent communities. Once cities begin to wrest control of pesticide regulation from the MDA, these cities will also become the licensing, enforcement, and testing bodies for these pesticides, an undertaking that localities cannot manage like the existing, statewide framework.

If the bill as written is passed, some of the products used by our members that are most likely at risk include the most effective termite and fly treatments. NPMA would like to remind the committee that termite treatments are required for FHA loans in most of Minnesota and innocuous things like outdoor uses of fly baits to trash cans and dumpsters could be unintentionally banned by cities. Termites do more damage in this country than floods and fires combined, and their populations are growing in Minnesota. Additionally, flies are known to be disease carriers and losing access to fly baits would allow their populations to flourish and result in the diseases they carry to become more widespread.

In conclusion, we want to be constructive in the policymaking process and applaud efforts to protect pollinators. Our members are keen stewards of the environment and pollinator health and abide by our recommended best management practices for pollinators, which we are happy to provide to the committee. This bill will remove the ability of pest management professionals to proactively protect Minnesota's public health, safety, and property. We firmly believe that your zip code should not determine your level of protection from these dangerous and destructive pests.

Thank you for the opportunity to inform the House Agriculture Finance and Policy committee as to how the professional pest management industry protects public health and property. Do not hesitate to contact me at jreynolds@pestworld.org if you have any questions and would like to discuss further.

Best regards,



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