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MEDICAL SOCIETY

*Every physician matters, each patient counts.*

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF REDUCING EXPOSURE TO PESTICIDES FOR  
CHILDREN  
BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL  
RESOURCES  
May 10, 2023**

**The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) wishes to be recorded in support of  
House Bill 811, and Senate Bill 444**

The MMS is a professional association of over 25,000 physicians, residents, and medical students across all clinical disciplines, organizations, and practice settings. The MMS is committed to advocating on behalf of patients for a better health care system, and on behalf of physicians, to help them to provide the best care possible. There are associations between early life exposure to pesticides and health sequelae in children. Indeed, in 2012, the American Academy of Pediatrics called for governments to reduce children’s exposure to pesticides, writing that scientific evidence “demonstrates associations between early life exposure to pesticides and pediatric cancers, decreased cognitive function, and behavioral problems.”

There are two bills before the committee which seek to reduce children’s exposure to harmful pesticides. The first is House bill 811, *An Act relative to improving pesticide protections for Massachusetts schoolchildren*. House bill 811 would narrow the list of acceptable pesticides for use on outdoor grounds of any school or childcare center in the Commonwealth. While there currently are statutory provisions that prohibit the use of the most dangerous pesticide products for use at schools and childcare centers in Massachusetts, this legislation would ensure greater protections so only truly “minimal risk pesticides” are used in school settings. This legislation is modeled after legislation passed in Connecticut and New York and is consistent with the integrated pest management strategies currently utilized in many municipalities in Massachusetts. We therefore urge the Committee to report House bill 811 out favorably.



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Finally, Senate bill 444, An Act to restrict the use of pesticides around children, would extend the prohibition against the use of pesticides to property occupied by the department of children and families, facilities of the juvenile court, facilities of the department of youth services and sports fields for town youth sports. This legislation would make the Commonwealth and its facilities most heavily used by children safer, healthier spaces and an example to child-oriented facilities across the Commonwealth.

**We therefore ask the Committee to report House bill 811, and Senate bill 444 out favorably** to improve the health of children at Massachusetts schools, childcare centers and state facilities by reducing exposure to potentially harmful pesticides.