



March 22, 2021

Chair Masin
House Local Government Division
100 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
St. Paul, MN

RE: HF 718, City Adoption of Pesticide Control Authorized

Chair Masin, Members of the House Local Government Division:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HF 718, which would remove existing state authority that ensures safe and consistent regulatory standards for pesticides in the state. We **Opposes HF 718** a bill that would weaken the state's ability to effectively regulate pesticides in Minnesota.

Pesticides in Minnesota are registered and regulated by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. These regulations enforced by the Department of Agriculture ensure safe and proper pesticide use in the state through registration of pesticides, licensing of pesticide applicators, and through research and enforcement activities. Uniform state law comprehensively regulates virtually every other aspect of labeling, distribution, sale, storage, transportation, use and application, and disposal of pesticides in the state.

State regulation of pesticides also ensures uniformity with federal regulation, and between states and their municipalities to avoid confusion that may endanger public health or the environment from differing requirements. HF 718 would remove this authority and weaken important standards, increase costs to Minnesotans due to a patchwork of compliance and additional needed resources, and create confusion and the potential for endangering people and natural resources.

Pesticides are important public health and environmental tools, protecting people, pets, and property from pests and insect-borne diseases, invasive and non-native plants, and providing safe and healthy places to live, work and play. Pesticides play an important role in agriculture and IPM (Integrated Pest Management). Crop protection tools and technologies are vital to protect farmers' crops and enable farmers to grow more food using less land and resources, therein protecting farmers investments, and making food more affordable.

Pesticides are rigorously reviewed, evaluated, and approved for sale and use at the state and

federal levels on an ongoing basis, ensuring they meet the most current scientific and safety standards. The manufacture, sale, and use of pesticides is extensively regulated by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. HF 718 not only weakens this regulatory oversight, public health, and environmental standards, but could create a patchwork of unworkable rules, and cause marketplace confusion.

Pesticides are among the most highly regulated products in the nation. Overriding the authority of the Department of Agriculture would create a patchwork of local rules and regulations across the 107 Home Rule cities and the 746 Statutory cities. HF 718 removes this authority therein weakening public health and safety standards, environmental protection for harmful and invasive insect and plant species, consistency in regulation and labeling of products, and other licensing and training standards currently set forth and implemented by the state. This would create a patchwork of unworkable rules, cause marketplace confusion, as well as removing enforceability for state and local governments to act swiftly in the case of public health emergency or pest outbreak. Both state and Federal pesticide regulatory agencies have significant staff resources devoted to reviewing and understanding proper uses, risks, and benefits of pesticides before registering them for use.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter as the Committee undertakes its deliberations about pesticide authority in Minnesota. Please contact us if you have any questions about these comments.

Sincerely,

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RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) is the national trade association representing manufacturers, formulators, distributors and other industry leaders engaged with specialty pesticides.

CropLife America (CLA) is the national trade association that represents the manufacturers, formulators and distributors of pesticides. CLA's member companies produce, sell and distribute virtually all the vital and necessary crop protection and biotechnology products used by farmers, ranchers and landowners.