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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 24

Offered January 17, 1994

Requesting the Department of Health, with the assistance of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Department of Environmental Quality, to study the necessity of regulating the commercial application of pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals in homes and on lawns.

Patron—Darner

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, many residents of the Commonwealth, and their pets, suffer from allergic reactions and other adverse health effects when exposed to pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals; and

WHEREAS, pesticides may be applied in apartment units by landlords without prior notice to residents; and

WHEREAS, pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals may be applied to lawns by commercial applicators without prior notice to persons in the vicinity of the area of application; and

WHEREAS, chemicals applied to lawns may wash into the surface and ground waters of the Commonwealth, where they may endanger fish, birds, and other non-target organisms, and may have a negative impact on water quality; and

WHEREAS, according to a 1991 report of the federal General Accounting Office, almost one half of states require lawn care companies to provide notice to the customer, its neighbors, or both, when pesticides or other chemicals are applied to residential lawns; and

WHEREAS, a report published by Virginia Tech in 1990 entitled "Pesticides and Fertilizers in the Urban Environment" recommended that professional applicators be required to notify the customer when a treatment will take place and when it will be safe to enter treated areas, and to see that the customer removes or protects vulnerable materials, animals, and persons from areas prior to treatment; and

WHEREAS, the National Cancer Institute has published papers showing a relationship between certain cancers and farm workers exposed to 2, 4-D, a herbicide commonly applied to residential lawns, and a correlation between certain cancers in dogs and exposure to 2, 4-D; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services reported to the Virginia Pesticide Control Board in April 1992 that seven states maintain registries for chemically sensitive individuals as a part of their pesticide application management programs; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Pesticide Control Board conducted a residential pesticide use forum in 1992, at which it considered a variety of issues, including posting and notification requirements and the maintenance of a listing of chemically sensitive persons, and decided to take no action with respect to these issues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Health, with the assistance of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Department of Environmental Quality, be requested to study the necessity of regulating the commercial application of pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals in homes and on lawns. In the course of its study, the Department shall review legislation enacted by other states and recommend programs in the Commonwealth that will reduce the health and environmental risks associated with the commercial application of chemicals in homes and on lawns.

The Department shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1995 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

INTRODUCED

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