April 30, 2019

A.2477-B (Englebright)/ S.5343 (Kaminsky)

Title: An act to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to prohibiting the use of chlorpyrifos.

Statement in Support: Chlorpyrifos is a potent pesticide used commonly in the United States that attacks the nervous systems of insects. But it is also a powerful neurotoxin, similar to sarin gas that can cause brain damage in children and induce nausea, dizziness, confusion, and at very high exposures (e.g., accidents or major spills), respiratory paralysis and death.

In New York, despite the existence of safer alternatives, the insecticide chlorpyrifos is widely used on corn, soybeans, and apples, as well as other common row crops. Chlorpyrifos is also used on golf courses, in landscaping applications and for mosquito control, despite ample evidence that the environmental and public health risks far outweigh the benefits. For years, physicians and environmental groups have pushed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to ban chlorpyrifos, as it has presented an unacceptable risk to human health and ecosystems. After several lawsuits and comprehensive scientific studies the EPA issued a revised human health risk assessment in November 2016, laying the groundwork for a chlorpyrifos ban. The U.S. EPA was expected to make a decision by Mar. 31, 2017, under a court ordered deadline, but, then-EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt delayed EPA’s proposed ban, and put off any decision about chlorpyrifos until 2022. On August 9, 2018, the U.S. 9th Circuit court of Appeals ruled that the EPA must ban chlorpyrifos within 60 days from that date, but the EPA appears determined to drag out the timeline indefinitely with appeals. New York State cannot allow corrupt and baseless determinations from the Trump administration to delay critical public health policy. The NYS Legislature and Governor must act immediately and pass A.2477-B/ S.5343 to fill this void in federal leadership and ban chlorpyrifos in New York, ending the sad legacy of this crippling neurotoxin on public health and ecosystems.

The Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Urges Your Support of A.2477-B/ S.5343