



November 13, 2020

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Executive Chamber
Capitol Building
Albany, N.Y. 12224

RE: S.6502-A (Serrano)/A.732-B (Rosenthal)

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We urge you to sign S.6502-A/A.732-B, to prohibit the use of glyphosate on state property. Glyphosate, originally patented by the Monsanto Company, has been registered as an herbicide in the United States since 1974. Today, the synthetic herbicide is found in hundreds of products sold by many companies, and is the active ingredient in many common weed killer products, including Roundup. Glyphosate use in the U.S. accounts for 19% of estimated global use since 1974.¹

In 2015, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer declared glyphosate a "probable human carcinogen."² A 2019 study concluded that there is a "compelling link" between exposures to glyphosate-based herbicides and increased risk for non-Hodgkin lymphoma.³ Despite the growing number of independent studies linking the chemical to cancer and the World Health Organization's stance, Trump's EPA reaffirms there are no risks to human health for current registered uses of glyphosate. Earlier this year, the EPA issued its decision to reapprove the registration of glyphosate under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, disregarding scientific findings in favor of industry profits.

Numerous cities, states, and countries throughout the world have taken action to either restrict or ban glyphosate. In November 2017, nine EU countries voted against relicensing it. California became the first state in the nation to issue a warning on glyphosate by adding it to the state's Proposition 65 list of chemicals and substances known to cause cancer.

Glyphosate threatens human health, as well as the health of our environment. New York should join the growing list of places where people are recognizing the dangers of glyphosate and taking appropriate action. Banning the use of glyphosate on state

¹ <https://enveurope.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s12302-016-0070-0>

² <https://www.iarc.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/MonographVolume112-1.pdf>

³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1383574218300887>

property is a meaningful and reasonable first step, as opposed to an outright statewide ban. The application of this chemical by government agencies to kill weeds in parks, playgrounds and picnic areas, and other state lands leaves anyone visiting these areas susceptible, unknowingly, to exposure. Many of these places are frequented by children and pets, who are even more vulnerable to the detrimental effects of toxic chemicals. In the absence of adequate precaution and consideration for science from the Trump EPA on this issue, the responsibility to protect New Yorkers falls single-handedly to our leaders at the state level. We urge you, Governor Cuomo, to protect the health and safety of New Yorkers by signing this meaningful legislation into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger Downs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R" and "D".

Roger Downs,
Conservation Director, Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter