A.528-A (Paulin)/S.4478-A (Brouk)

**Purpose:** This bill will prohibit children's overnight or summer day camps from applying pesticides to any playground, athletic or playing field.

**Statement of Support:**
In 2011, the New York Child Safe Playing Fields Act was passed, banning pesticide use on all school properties in the state. This bill extends that ban to summer camps based on evidence that childhood exposure to pesticides brings heightened risk of cancer, nervous or endocrine damage, and decreased cognitive functioning.

Children actually spend more time outdoors in the summer so are more likely to come in contact with these toxic substances than they do at school. At overnight or day camp, children often walk barefoot on the grass and then swim in lakes, pools and ponds, tracking the pesticides into the water, which can then affect aquatic life, as well.

This bill does not apply to areas of camps where it might be necessary to repel insects or rodents, such as kitchens, and it does allow for emergency application of pesticides. There are exemptions for publicly-owned or publicly-leased property in a city of more than one million residents and for certain camps where using alternatives is not practicable, but in general it seems clear that prohibitions on pesticide use in NY schools should be extended to summer camps.

Children deserve the opportunity to play in a safe and chemical-free environment, especially because of their vulnerability based on their smaller size, developing bodies and faster metabolisms. Additionally, pesticides applied to playgrounds and playing fields also find their way into the air and water, further polluting our environment. Sierra Club is devoted to protecting public health and the environment by decreasing exposure to hazardous substances and therefore supports this ban on pesticide use in areas where children play at summer camps.

**Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter urges your support of A.528-A/S.4478-A**