



Agricultural Council Of Maine

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In Opposition to

LD 1159 An Act To Amend Membership Requirements of the Board of Pesticide Control

April 13, 2021

Senator Dill, Representative O'Neil, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry:

The Agricultural Council of Maine - established in 1990 - is the central forum for communication among agricultural groups in Maine. Our mission is to share information and provide leadership and advocacy on agricultural issues that impact all sectors of Maine agriculture. Membership in AGCOM is open to producer groups and statewide non-profits that service agriculture. In addition, businesses and smaller agricultural groups can become non-voting associate members. Non-voting ex-officio members include the University of Maine, Cooperative Extension, federal and state agricultural agencies, and representatives from Maine's congressional offices.

At our March 23, 2021 meeting, AgCOM members voted to oppose LD 1159.

The Board of Pesticide Control is an entity whose membership requires expertise in handling and understanding the chemicals, both natural and synthetic, that are used as part of all aspects of IPM programs. Industry participation is critical to the scholarly discussions that make up the work of such a Board, as is academic expertise, and members with a practical understanding of agricultural and silvicultural activities, as well as applicators and members of the public.

The make-up of the BPC is a carefully crafted balance of interests that have repeatedly been discussed in past ACF Committees/ Legislatures. The discussions have been extensive and involved many interested parties reflecting multiple points of view, coming from a variety of non-pesticide related backgrounds, and from all corners of the State of Maine. A clearly defined process already exists to raise any concerns or objections about potential members through the Legislative confirmation process, as well as opportunities to suggest possible members or advocate on behalf of or against others. If there are objections to certain individuals that are appointed by the Governor and approved by the ACF Committee to serve on the BPC, the full Senate must also agree through confirmation of the appointee before that person is seated on the BPC. The terms of service for each appointment are well defined and give opportunities for people to advocate anew for their preferred appointee. A reconstitution of the BPC with the objective of specifically changing the outcome of their deliberations is more likely to create an imbalance in the make-up of the Board rather than solving a perceived problem.

We strongly believe that the historical legislative record demonstrates extensive discussion and deliberation on the issues brought up in LD 1159. AgCOM urges an Ought-Not-To-Pass vote on LD 1159.

Thank you.

JulieMarie Bickford
AgCOM

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