



May 3, 2021

To: Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry Committee

Re: LD1599

I am writing in **opposition of LD 1599 - An Act To Establish A Maine Pesticide Sales And Use Registry.**

As a Golf Course Superintendent, pesticides play a crucial role in my operation. I applaud your initiative to minimize the amount of pesticides being used in our state, however LD1599, as it is written, recommends a lot of practices our industry is already doing and drastically downplays our current efforts. LD1599 suggests promoting IPM strategies and implementing science-based technologies when, as an industry, we are already doing so. In fact, we (Maine Golf Course Superintendents Association) just published a 200 page, *Best Management Practices For Maine Golf Courses* document. This document is 3 years in the making and consists of 12 chapters that cover Water Quality Mgmt., Conservation, Protection & Efficient Use, Nutrient Management, Pesticide Management, Cultural Practices, IPM and Pollinators to name a few. This document was not only reviewed by, but created with the help of the DACF, MLNA, MDEP, MBPC, UMaine, Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District, Maine Licensed Landscape Architects, FB Environmental and Environmental Solutions. Senator King even wrote our forward, applauding our efforts and called our BMP manual “an important contribution to our ongoing work to protect Maine’s environment.”

LD1599 states that agencies and private interest groups will work to educate pesticide users on the proper use of these products. Not only does our industry work closely with chemical manufactures to help bring products to market through university trials carried out on our golf courses, but we, the MGCSA, put on an annual conference, open to all licensed applicators, as well as the public to provide education from some of the most knowledgeable experts and PhD’s in their fields, from all over the world.

LD1599 also states that we shall submit individual application reports to the board within one week after the application and eventually, 24 hours prior to the application. If the goal of LD1599 is to know what is being applied to quantify if usage is actually

being reduced, then this step is redundant, as all licensed applicators must already submit an annual summary report to the board.

Golf generates \$300 million in revenue, creates 5,000 full and part-time jobs and makes \$2 million in charitable donations. We pride ourselves on being stewards of the environment and unlike lawn care, where applications are billed to the homeowner for a profit, golf courses are bound by a budget and as such, do not wastefully, improperly or haphazardly make applications. If the goal is to reduce overall pesticide usage in Maine, wouldn't the logical place to start be with the homeowner and applications made strictly for esthetics? What about the homeowner who buys their own products from "big box stores" - would they be required to report usage to the board as well? Homeowners can buy most of the products we use - without a license, understanding of the product or proper application training and apply at free will. Use of these products on private property does not make these products any less harmful to the public or the environment when used incorrectly. Perhaps tracking and regulating homeowner use is a more appropriate place to start reducing the overall usage of pesticides in Maine.

It is for these reasons and many more, that I am strongly opposed to LD1599 as it is written.

Respectfully submitted,

Toby S. Young

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Director, Maine Golf Course Superintendents Association

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