



January 29, 2020

Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

Senator Anne Gobi, Senate Chair
Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture
Room 513, State House
Boston, MA 02133

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Representative Smitty Pignatelli, House Chair
Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture
Room 473F, State House
Boston, MA 02133

RE: Support for H.776/S.447, An Act empowering towns and cities to protect residents and the environment from harmful pesticides

John Cumbler

Margo Fenn

Dear Chair Gobi and Chair Pignatelli:

DeeDee Holt

Thomas Huettner

Pat Hughes

Steven Koppel

Jack Looney

Cheryl Lubin

Elysse Magnotto-Cleary

Blue Magruder

Eliza McClennen

Stephen Mealy

Kris Ramsay

Robert Summersgill

Taryn Wilson

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) strongly supports **An Act empowering towns and cities to protect residents and the environment from harmful pesticides (H.776/S.447)** currently under consideration by the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture and urges the committee to report out this legislation with a favorable recommendation.

Founded in 1968, APCC is the Cape Cod region's leading nonprofit environmental advocacy and education organization, working for the adoption of laws, policies and programs that protect and enhance Cape Cod's natural resources and quality of life. Central to APCC's mission—and to the health of Cape Cod's residents and environment—is the protection of the region's groundwater. As a sole source aquifer, Cape Cod's groundwater is the Cape's drinking water supply, it feeds our one thousand ponds, and it drains into our many marine estuaries and bays. In many areas, groundwater is located close to the surface of the Cape's sandy, highly permeable soils, thereby making the Cape's water resources extremely vulnerable to the introduction of contaminants, including pesticides that are known to be, or suspected of being, harmful to human health and the environment.

H.776/ S.447 provides communities on Cape Cod, as well as other cities and towns across the Commonwealth, with the necessary tools and options to protect public health and fragile environmental resources. It reaffirms the state's authority to regulate the labeling, distribution, sale, storage, transportation, use and application, and disposal of pesticides in the Commonwealth. In addition, H.776/S.447 specifies that the regulations established by the state for the use, application and disposal of pesticides shall be minimum standards and restrictions, and provides cities and towns with a local option to adopt more stringent standards and restrictions for the use, application and disposal of pesticides.

Just as local authority is currently given to municipalities to adopt more stringent standards for public health and wetland protection, H.776/S.447 recognizes that each community is unique, and many health and environmental issues related to pesticide use are best handled by local officials familiar with local conditions. Soil types, the use of groundwater for public and private drinking water, proximity of schools, hospitals, residential areas, sensitive natural resource areas, rare species habitat, surface waters and wetlands, and other uniquely local characteristics create different situations in different communities. A one-size-fits-all approach to regulating how pesticides are used in the Commonwealth's many communities does not adequately address all local conditions or interests. Municipalities should be afforded the ability to determine where, when and to what extent pesticides are to be used within their own borders. H.776/S.447 provides that missing local authority.

H.776/S.447 sets in place reasonable measures to help ensure that public health and the environment are not compromised by the improper use of pesticides based on unique local conditions. APCC therefore respectfully requests the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture to move this legislation forward with a favorable recommendation.

APCC thanks the chairs and the members of the committee for your consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,



Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director



Don Keeran
Assistant Director

cc: Sen. Julian Cyr Rep. William Crocker
 Rep. Dylan Fernandes Rep. David Vieira
 Rep. Sarah Peake Rep. Randy Hunt
 Rep. Timothy Whelan