



House Bill 995

Lawn Care Pesticides – Child Care Centers, Schools, and Recreation Facilities - Prohibition

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: March 13, 2015

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 995. The bill would impose unnecessary and onerous new restrictions on the ability of county parks and recreation departments to properly manage parklands, athletic fields, golf courses, and ornamental gardens under their control.

County park and recreation departments have judicious and robust application plans and follow all prescribed instructions for pesticides, including limiting public access after application. Departments do not apply needless or excessive pesticide applications as this does nothing but cost the departments money and prevent the public from accessing recreational lands. Additionally, departments are already required to record and post all registered pesticide applications.

As county recreational lands and centers are open to individuals under the age of 18, HB 995 would severely curtail the ability of departments to manage invasive species or destructive pests such as the emerald ash borer. Having to seek an emergency exception from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene or a local health department every time an application is needed will be administratively challenging and it is questionable if pest and land management would even constitute an “immediate threat to human health.” The result will be damage to ecologically sensitive lands and a degradation of recreational fields.

HB 995 would place unnecessary and damaging restrictions on the ability of county park and recreation departments to responsibly manage pesticide applications to public recreational lands. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to give HB 995 an **UNFAVORABLE** report.