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CAPE COD  
COMMISSION

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April 10, 2024

Via E-Mail: [JointCommittee.Environment@malegislature.gov](mailto:JointCommittee.Environment@malegislature.gov)

Chairs of the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
24 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Bill H. 4481, An Act Authorizing the Town of Orleans to Adopt a Pesticide Reduction Bylaw

Dear Chairs of the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

I am writing in support of efforts by the Town of Orleans to reduce the impacts of pesticides on our environment. Pesticides have known human and animal impacts beyond their intended use. On Cape Cod, the detrimental effects of locally applied pesticides may have a broader impact due to our geology and shared sole source aquifer. As Cape Cod faces multiple threats to the quality of our water supply and integrity of our ecosystems, we support efforts to reduce and manage toxins in the environment.

Pesticides are often misapplied, resulting in pollution of our drinking water and in harmful and unnecessary loss of beneficial insects. Birds, snakes, and mammalian predators can be the collateral loss of targeting rodents, not only disrupting our natural systems, but potentially impacting rare and endangered species as well.

While Commission staff support this effort for the reasons cited, we recommend careful consideration of the final wording of the bylaw to allow for prudent use and management of pesticides to protect human health, safety, and the environment, where other alternatives are not available.

Regional regulatory guidance aligns with Orleans's proposed pesticide reduction bylaw. The Water Resources Technical Bulletin identifies pesticides as a hazardous material that, when released into the environment, will pose a threat to groundwater and drinking water supplies. Water resources objectives recommend non-pesticide control measures be used to maintain pest populations but allow selective pesticides that result in the lowest possible risk to health and the environment to be considered when no effective non-pesticide control measures are available. Similarly, the wetland, wildlife and plant habitat objectives identified in the Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan generally discourage the use of chemicals to treat invasive species except in situations where chemical management would reduce adverse impacts on the environment.



I look forward to continued progress as Orleans works to address this important environmental challenge.

Sincerely,



Kristy Senatori  
Executive Director

CC: Karen Zirkle, Office of Chair Cahill  
Jacob Newman, Office of Chair Cahill  
Erica Woloszynski, Office of Chair Rausch