

Before the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
Presented by Zack Pistora, Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club
Oral Opponent on HB 2476
1-21-26



Chair Rahjes and Honorable Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit opponent testimony on HB 2476, a bill that would compel registered pesticides in Kansas to conform to the health or safety determinations by federal authorities. The Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club - representing over 4000 dues-paying members across Kansas as well as tens of thousands of supporters that act with us - care deeply about our quality of life and environment and have long been concerned about the adverse impacts of pesticides.

We are worried HB 2476 effectively shields pesticide companies from legal accountability, including personal injury lawsuits by offering legal immunity from any harm pesticides might cause to people or the environment. Thus, we urge you to oppose HB 2476.

K.S.A. 2-2205 subsection (c) already allows for uniformity in the law between states and federal government, so HB 2476 is unnecessary for consistency in the label. Instead, HB 2476 seems more about giving mega chemical corporations a pass from facing case-by-case judicial assessments of inadequate warning labels and serious injuries that have resulted in millions of dollars in compensation and billions in settlements caused by harmful pesticides.

By conforming to HB 2476 undermines the rights of Kansans to pursue justice under our legal system and further reduces the State of Kansas' authority to protect Kansans from any potential harm.

Furthermore, HB 2476 would likely impair the ability for the Secretary of Agriculture to evaluate pesticides and install restricted use designations upon pesticides that are shown to cause harm to Kansans or the environment. In other words, HB 2476 cedes the ability for Kansas leaders to protect Kansans from harm in favor of what's determined by a more politically motivated, hollowed-out EPA.

HB 2476 resembles recent legislation efforts in other states to try to reduce the opportunity for residents to sue pesticide manufacturers for injury, such as cases involving Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma for Glyphosate. At least 12 states have seen similar bills in their Legislature; most of them, including Missouri, Iowa, Idaho, Florida, and North Carolina, have yet to advance the legislation due to bipartisan opposition. It's important to remember many of the agrochemicals of concern, such as Glyphosate, remain on the market and available for use in each of those states. Yet another reason we are skeptical about any need for HB 2476, especially as it relates to actual benefit to the people of Kansas.

Finally, let us recall our history of pesticides and protecting people and wildlife from cancer, reproductive harm, and other environmental complications in America. It was well over 50 years ago that we faced a similar decision point concerning another pesticide, Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, or DDT. Let us recall that there was also early opposition from the agriculture community and government in restricting DDT's use. Thankfully, as a society, we were eventually able to turn the corner on DDT's harmful human, wildlife, and environmental effects and still maintain America's agricultural industry. Let us keep those lessons in mind as we have a similar discussion today. **Please vote no on HB 2476.**

Sincerely,

Zack Pistora | Kansas Director and State Lobbyist, Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club

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The Sierra Club is the largest grassroots environmental organization dedicated to enjoying, exploring, and protecting our great outdoors. The Kansas Chapter has been our state's strongest grassroots voice on environmental matters for over fifty years.