



January 26, 2021

The Honorable Bob Wieckowski  
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #2  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Richard Bloom  
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Support for Transition to Safer, Sustainable Pest Management (3930-024-BCP-2021-GB 8570-040-BCP-2021-GB)**

Dear Chairs Wieckowski and Bloom,

On behalf of the 200+ member organizations of the Californians for Pesticide Reform coalition, we write to express strong support for Governor Newsom's visionary proposal regarding the pesticide mill fee. An update of the fee structure is long overdue, and the proposed increase will provide needed funding in support of more ecological and resilient farming, increased oversight, and better protections for communities and ecosystems. We strongly support this proposal to introduce a tiered approach, with higher fees for pesticides that cause acute harm to human health.

Agricultural pesticide use threatens the health of communities, with the heaviest burden falling on low-income communities of color. Pesticides also harm ecosystems and are linked to biodiversity loss, threatening populations of pollinators and beneficial predators. The cost of these harms is overwhelmingly borne by society at large and not by the industry that causes them.

The state has a key role to play in encouraging and incentivizing pest management practices that do the least harm to people and the environment while ensuring robust and resilient farming into the future. With this mill fee proposal, the state is taking up this critical role, both by financially incentivizing use of less toxic chemicals and by providing funding for training and

support for farmers to adopt safe pest control methods. We also strongly support the use of the increased mill fee for greater enforcement, community outreach and air monitoring.

We encourage the Administration and the legislature to prioritize direct protections for the most impacted communities, and to ensure that state monitoring efforts result in mitigations in response to any exceedances. We also encourage the use of funds for projects that protect and restore water, soil and habitat for impacted species which are essential for a functioning ecosystem.

We look forward to working with you to make this proposal a reality.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Sarah C. Aird and Jane Sellen in blue ink.

Sarah Aird and Jane Sellen, Co-Directors, Californians for Pesticide Reform

*And the members of the CPR Steering Committee:*

Anne Katten, Pesticide and Worker Safety Project, Director, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation

Caroline Farrell, Executive Director, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment

Nayamin Martinez, Executive Director, Central California Environmental Justice Network

Cesar Lara, Executive Director, Monterey Bay Central Labor Council

Margaret Reeves, Senior Scientist, Pesticide Action Network

Martha Dina Arguello, Executive Director, Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles

CC:

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