



February 27, 2018

Dear President Miller and Members of the Maryland State Senate,

The Maryland Department of Agriculture and Department of Natural Resources are very concerned with the provisions in SB 500/HB 116 - Pesticides - Chlorpyrifos - Prohibition because the legislation would ban a product that is proven to be effective in treatment of the spotted lanternfly. The spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) is a non-native invasive insect that poses an imminent threat to a number of industries statewide. Undue legislative harm will hinder and restrict our farmers and certified pesticide applicators from combating this invasive pest and could cause future threats to food security and production.

The spotted lanternfly has already caused significant damage in southeastern Pennsylvania and is making its way to our northern border. Pennsylvania expanded its quarantine area earlier this year, and has reported sightings of this pest just 6 miles from the Maryland line. Spotted lanternfly has been found in Delaware, New York, and just last week in Virginia. If this pest were to invade Maryland, the negative economic impact would be enormous. The increasingly large host list includes many agricultural commodities that would be affected including the grape industry.

A recent *Baltimore Sun* article titled "Maryland braces for invasion of lanternflies, races to slow their spread," reports:

"The lanternfly robs grapes of so much sweetness that farmers can't bring them to market. And the insects' gooey excretion, or 'honeydew,' attracts insects and a form of sooty mold that can finish off the already weakened plants. It also sticks to houses, decks, railings and patios in infested areas. It also feasts on more host plants than expected, reproduces more quickly than anticipated, and faces no known native predators. It also latches onto a wide variety of hard surfaces, allowing it to travel to parts unknown aboard cars, trucks and trains."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture provided \$5.5 million to help Pennsylvania researchers explore how to eradicate and control the lanternfly, and recently announced it will provide an additional \$17.5 million in emergency funding.

When a population of this pest is found in Maryland it will be critical that state agencies be ready to use all available tools to prevent this pest from becoming established. Some of these tools include the use of both herbicides and pesticides. Using both of these tools has been effective in reducing the population of lanternfly in Pennsylvania. Pesticide usage will be critical for the grape and orchard growers to prevent yield loss and, in some cases, complete loss of crop.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture will be in charge of the state's response, with support from USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS). To ensure we protect our agriculture commodities, natural resources, and citizens, it is important we have every tool in the toolbox. That is why our departments have real concerns with the prohibitions in SB 500/HB 116, and would ask you to vote against the passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,



Joseph Bartenfelder

Secretary

Sincerely,



Mark Belton

Secretary