



Washington State Legislature

October 30, 2023
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Mr. Regan:

As the chair and ranking minority member of the Washington State House of Representatives Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, and the chair and ranking minority member of the Washington State Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources and Parks Committee, we are very concerned about the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) federal pilot project that would restrict pesticides on more than two million acres in the Northwest.

Two of the 27 endangered or threatened species listed in the report will directly impact Washington state and be devastating to our agricultural and forestry industries.

Our own Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), indicates that the EPA's proposal is "in direct opposition to scientific literature."

The department pointed out that studies identify habitat loss, not pesticides, as the main reason the Taylor's checkerspot butterflies are endangered. The department cited the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's recovery plan, published last November.

The federal recovery plan lists habitat loss, invasive plants, wasps and spiders, extreme weather, climate change and military training as threats to the butterfly. It does not list pesticides.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has reportedly also stated that the impacts of the new pesticide rules will be "staggering." It would make farming in some regions next to impossible.

Are the EPA and USDA not working together to come up with a realistic plan that will not drive our farmers, ranchers, and forestry industries out of business?

They understand the environment and land use better than anyone. Their livelihoods depend on it, and they put food in the grocery stores and on kitchen tables.

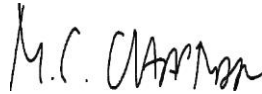
Washington state takes the use of pesticides very seriously. We have worked hard to ensure there is a balance between agriculture, the environment and protecting wildlife as well as our citizens.

We respectfully request the EPA reconsider this pilot project and revisit the potential economic harm and negative impacts it will have on Washington and other states in the Pacific Northwest.

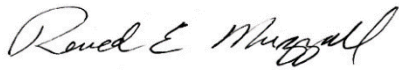
Respectfully,



Representative Tom Dent, Ranking Republican
House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee
13th Legislative District



Representative Mike Chapman, Chair
House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee
24th Legislative District



Senate Ron Muzzall, Ranking Republican
Senate Ag, Water, and Natural Resources Committee
10th Legislative District



Senate Kevin Van De Wege, Chair
Senate Ag, Water, Natural Resources Committee
24th Legislative District

Cc: Sen. Patty Murray
Sen. Maria Cantwell
Rep. Dan Newhouse
Rep. Kim Schrier
Rep. Cathy McMorris-Rogers
Rep. Rick Larson
Kelly Susewind, WDFW
Eric Gardner, DFW
Brad Thompson, DFW
Thomas J. Vilsack, USDA
Derek Sandison, WSDA