

Ginger Blaisdell

From: Debra Banaszak
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 12:12 PM
To: Ginger Blaisdell
Subject: FW: Letter in support of HB 53

From: alaskanrn2@gmail.com [<mailto:alaskanrn2@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 11:40 AM
To: Debra Banaszak
Subject: Re: Letter in support of HB 53

To Whom it May Concern:

I would like to lend my whole hearted support for this bill. As a registered nurse I am concerned with the health impacts of pesticide use on our population . I am also concerned with herbicide/pesticide application on our lands which hold an abundance of salmon spawning streams. As past president of the Alaska Nurses Association, I am pleased in our record of the precautionary principle and resolutions passed banning wide spread application of pesticides. As a burgeoning commercial organic farmer I am concerned with application and aerial contamination and the financial impacts it might pose on my produce. As Alaskans with a relative pristine environment I see the real possibility to fulfill the ever-growing demand for organic or pesticide free market and would not want to diminish our opportunities statewide.

If you would like supporting data on glyphosates and others and their detrimental impacts I would be happy to supply you with such.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
Susan E Walsh
1252 Upper Millar
Ketchikan, AK.
99901

Sent from Windows Mail

From: Debra Banaszak
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 11:13 AM
To: alaskanrn2@gmail.com

Hello Susan,

I found your email and wondering if you could send the letter to my email...that way I can get it to the Committee faster. Thanks,

March 9, 2015

Dear Representative Ortiz,

I am writing to express my support for HB53, which will reinstate the public process concerning the state's application of pesticides and provide protection for watersheds that sustain salmon and provide drinking water. I also supported HB201 during the last legislative session and hope that this committee hears the comments, personal accounts and appeals from communities, tribes, commercial fisheries, residents and other resource users directly impacted by this bill.

I have lived on Prince of Wales Island, in southeast Alaska for over 30 years as a high school science teacher, commercial fisher, subsistence gatherer, and recreation user. I have taken great pride living in a state where protecting salmon habitat and preserving the reputation of a wild and chemical-free resource has been a priority, and up to now the state of Alaska has not sprayed herbicides along state right of ways on our island. Public right of ways on POW Island and most of southeast Alaska, often run alongside thriving salmon streams and critical habitat areas for wildlife. Mechanical means have been used to clear these right of ways, and although not always "pretty" there was consolation in the fact that Alaska had acted more responsibly than other states willing to broadcast spray alongside their roadsides and right of ways. We had little reason to believe that things would change.

However in March of 2013 things did change. In an effort to streamline the permitting process the state of Alaska no longer needed to provide for public comment with regard to DOT's plan to control vegetation by spraying herbicides along public right of ways. DOT needed only to notify that they were going to spray in accordance with their plan. In the name of streamlining state government and permitting we are about to sacrifice what we have worked so hard protect. This is no place to cut government corners. We have a right to know and to comment when it comes to protecting salmon habitat and our drinking water.

Prince of Wales Island residents heard about the state's plan to spray herbicides by word of mouth from a small piece published in the Ketchikan Daily News, with little time to voice opposition. The state had gone from using no herbicides to a plan to spray them along 17 miles of right of way, most of it along watersheds draining into salmon streams including the Thorne River, one of the largest and most productive river systems on POW Island.

HB53 will restore public comment on important matters such as the state's herbicide application program, and will also help to restore trust in state government.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Fecko
Craig, Alaska

Debra Banaszak

From: Dewitt-Schleifman, Meda M <mmschleifman@anthc.org>
Sent: Monday, March 09, 2015 8:25 PM
To: Rep. Daniel Ortiz
Subject: Prevent the Unnecessary Use of Harmful Pesticides

Hello, I am formally requesting for you to include the voice of Alaskan's on HB 53 and appose toxic chemicals.

It is vitally important that our state has the capacity to say "no!" when it comes to the poisoning of our Great Land. Toxic substances have no place here, we want to leave a land capable of sustaining life and thriving ecosystems indefinitely, not just for the next generation. We as Alaskan's pride ourselves on our vibrant landscape teaming with life, please I beseech you to hear this request and stand for what is true and just.

Gunalcheesh,

Meda DeWitt Schleifman, TH

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Testimony on HB53 to House Transportation Committee

by Jim Sykes

March 10, 2015

Good Afternoon Co-Chairs and Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Jim Sykes, representing myself, not as a member of the Mat-Su Borough Assembly which has not reviewed HB53.

Today I speak in support of HB53. It takes a reasonable approach that includes notification to the public, hearing from the nearby community, and a permit review process. No-spray setbacks from water are common sense procedures that protect our waters, fish and wildlife and people who use them. My wife and I use some of these waters for personal dip net fishing.

My experience in dealing with the pesticide issue began in the mid 1980's in a remote area north of Talkeetna where people were concerned about chemicals used by the then federally-owned Alaska railroad. At one point I served as an alternate to a railroad citizens vegetation advisory committee when the railroad tried some creative alternatives like baking weeds with infrared, and I believe steam was tried. The most successful alternatives were hand clearing by prisoners and more intensive maintenance of the track ballast, which continued for quite some time.

I think it's important to keep an open mind to new technologies and new alternatives that may arise. In fact I would suggest a minor addition to page three of version 'E' of the bill near the end of line 12 after the word "information" adding "or other effective alternatives." The public should be invited to consider and comment on new developments.

Permit review proved important in about 2007, when the DEC denied the railroad a permit to spray most of the track from Seward halfway to Fairbanks. The railroad had not identified many water crossings to stop the spray in wetlands and fish rearing areas. Without careful review and action by the DEC, critical areas could have been sprayed.

In my past years of dealing with pesticides a couple of things stick out. I learned that most herbicides are not tested in arctic or sub-arctic conditions which means chemical effects may last longer, travel

farther, or both. I remember that one chemical that was tested in Southcentral and near Fairbanks had characteristics that were significantly different than Lower 48 testing had shown.

The other thing was the so called "inert ingredients." Sounds sort of neutral, but in fact some of the inert ingredients were as poisonous or more poisonous than the weed killing chemical. But chemical companies are not required to list these ingredients are so the real risks are not fully known.

Reasonable caution is called for.

During the past 25 years, Railbelt communities, Native Tribal organizations and individuals have dealt with herbicides as the issue has waxed and waned. In 2006, the Mat-Su Borough Assembly unanimously passed a resolution promoting a healthy railroad and asking the railroad not to spray along the tracks within the Borough.

While differing opinions will probably continue about whether, where or when to use a particular pesticide or herbicide, most people can agree that we need safe water, and safe communities. HB53 provides a straightforward process for notifying the public, hearing from the community and evaluating a permit application that keeps public safety as a priority. I think it's a good idea to pass it.

I'll answer questions if there are any. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Jim Sykes
PO Box 696
Palmer, AK 99645

Phone 354-6962