

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GARA
REPRESENTATIVE KERTTULA
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House Bill 201

Sponsor Statement

HB 201: Application of Pesticides and Broadcast Chemicals

Clean drinking water and chemical-free salmon are a vital part of living in Alaska. House Bill 201 would protect salmon streams and drinking water sources from toxic pesticides by establishing buffer zones. The legislation would prevent the application of herbicides and pesticides within 150 feet of salmon streams, and within 600 feet of drinking water sources. HB 201 would also restore requirements for public notification and opportunities for public participation in the pesticide permitting process.

In February 2013, the Parnell Administration issued regulations that eliminated the right of Alaskans to participate in decisions about the spraying of toxic pesticides and herbicides on public lands. The Administration's regulation changes issued by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) eliminated requirements to identify and safeguard the state's waters including salmon streams, sensitive waterways, drinking water sources, fish and wildlife habitat, and public health.

This bill addresses the concerns of many Alaskans about the need to protect salmon and their habitat from harmful chemicals. Deep concerns have been expressed by the public about the potential contamination of our drinking water sources, which is viewed by many as a critical public health issue. This bill offers protection of these vital resources and re-establishes right-to-know provisions and public involvement in decisions about pesticide use in public places.