



HEALTHY SCHOOLS NETWORK, INC.

PO Box 6251 Washington, DC 20015

January 30, 2026

The Honorable Adam Burkhammer
Room 219E, Building 1
State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Delegate Burkhammer:

The Healthy Schools Network, as the leader of the nationwide Coalition for Healthier Schools, appreciates your introduction of House Bill 4907, a bill to restrict the use of certain pesticides near schools. We strongly urge that the House of Delegates move expeditiously to pass the bill.

Schools should be places of learning and safety—not environments where children are exposed to toxic chemicals linked to serious, potentially lifelong health harms. Children are uniquely vulnerable to pesticide exposure because their bodies and brains are still developing, they breathe more air relative to their body weight, and they spend significant time outdoors on school days. Even low-level exposure to pesticides has been associated with increased risks of neurological harm, cancer, respiratory illness, and developmental effects.

This bill addresses a critical gap in protection by restricting the use of some of the most concerning pesticides near schools, including paraquat, glyphosate, chlorpyrifos, atrazine, 2,4-D, dicamba, and PFAS-based pesticides. Many of these chemicals have been linked in scientific studies to neurological damage, endocrine disruption, learning and behavioral challenges, and increased cancer risk. Paraquat, for example, is so toxic that it has been banned in more than 70 countries and is strongly linked to Parkinson's disease, yet it can still be sprayed near where children learn and play in the United States.

Importantly, evidence shows that so-called “mitigation measures” are insufficient to protect children. Pesticides can drift beyond application sites, linger in the air longer than previously understood, persist in soil for years, and be resuspended in dust that children can inhale or ingest. Young people at schools have no protective equipment, no choice in exposure, and no way to avoid these risks.

Protecting children's health does not require sacrificing agricultural productivity. Alternatives are available for the pesticides covered by this bill, and farmers in many other states and countries successfully grow the same crops without them. Restricting pesticide use near schools is a

reasonable, science-based safeguard that prioritizes children's health while allowing agriculture to thrive.

West Virginia has an opportunity to lead by ensuring that no child's education comes at the cost of their health. We urge the House of Delegates to pass this legislation and take a clear stand for the safety and well-being of students, educators, and school communities across the state.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to protecting West Virginia's children.

Respectfully,



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 **Healthy Schools Network**

<https://healthyschools.org/>

Founded in 1995, Healthy Schools Network is an award-winning 501(c)3 that has fostered the national healthy school environments movement.