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RISE Responds to Senate Action on Pesticides

(WASHINGTON, DC, July 5, 2005) The challenges facing human studies for pesticide risk assessment continued last week on the U.S. Senate floor when two conflicting amendments were passed.

In an almost two to one vote, the Senate passed the amendment proposed by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) to the FY06 Interior Appropriations bill (H.R. 2361) that would prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from using appropriated funds to consider or accept data regarding the safety of pesticides that is based on studies of human subjects--even when such data has been obtained according to strict scientific and ethical protocols.

However, all is not lost. An amendment proposed by Sen. Conrad Burns (R-MT) that directs the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a review of all third party human studies to identify or quantify toxic effects and calling for finalization of the rule in 180 days, did pass, so the fight continues.

In speaking about the impact these votes hold for the specialty pesticide industry, Allen James, president of RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment)® said, "The real impact for companies registering new products would lie in their inability to conduct proper testing of their products. For example, human studies are an integral part of testing for repellents. The dermal exposure studies are designed to demonstrate the efficacy of repellents to protect people from mosquitoes and other pests that spread disease, and of course, to assure there is no skin sensitivity to the product. Human testing also establishes protective regulatory standards for pest control workers using any number of products. Many of the studies are designed to assess the potential for skin irritation and allergic reactions. Without these results, the EPA would be making scientific judgment with inadequate information."

"RISE will continue to support the use of human studies," Mr. James stated, "and we plan to work with our allies on conference committee to help them understand that the Boxer amendment truly is a threat to public health."

RISE is the national association representing the manufacturers, formulators, distributors and other industry leaders involved with pesticide and fertilizer products used in turf, ornamental, pest control, aquatic and terrestrial vegetation and other non-food/fiber applications. Visit our website at www.pestfacts.org.

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