

Joint Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries

Bill Summary

Bill Number:	H.124
Title:	An Act relative to improving pesticide protections for Massachusetts schoolchildren
Sponsors:	Representative Gentile of Sudbury
Cosponsors:	Representatives Keefe of Worcester, Ashe of Longmeadow, Garry of Dracut, and Hawkins of Attleboro; Senator Eldridge
Hearing Date:	Wednesday, July 9, 2025 at 1:00 PM - 05:00 PM, A-1
Reporting Date:	Sunday, September 7, 2025
Similar Matters:	S.64 (Senator Eldridge - Identical)

Prior History

2023-2024: Filed as H.811; Referred to the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources; Reported favorably to the House Committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling; Ordered to a third reading where no further action was taken.

2021-2022: Filed as H.926; Referred to the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture; Reported favorably to the House Committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling where no further action was taken.

2019-2020: Filed as H.791; Referred to the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture; Reported favorably to the House Committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling where no further action was taken.

Current Law

Chapter 132B of the Massachusetts General Laws describes and implements the Massachusetts Pesticide Control Act. Section 6C of chapter 132B regulates pesticide use in schools and child care programs, limiting when pesticides can be applied and requiring that pupils and guardians are notified in most circumstances. Section 6G of chapter 132B limits the types of pesticides that can be used in schools and child care programs, specifying that all pesticides used must be part of the facility's integrated pest management plan, must not be identified as a known, likely or probable carcinogen, cannot have ingredients which are identified as Inerts of Toxicological Concern by the EPA, and must not be used for purely aesthetic purposes.

Summary

This bill increases the amount of land which is required to follow the limits on pesticide application in Section 6C of chapter 132B of the Massachusetts General Laws to also include juvenile court facilities, department of youth services facilities, and fields used by youth sports teams. It also requires all properties within 150 feet of the facilities listed in section 6C to also comply with these restrictions. It also clarifies that any entity which applies pesticides in areas covered by this section must comply with its restrictions, regardless of whether they own the property, manage it or are hired to apply pesticides.

This bill also requires that schools and child care programs may only apply pesticides which are classified by the EPA as exempt material and which only contain ingredients included in the USDA list of synthetic substances allowed for use in organic crop production. Substances other than those which meet these requirements can only be applied if the location is granted a hardship waiver by the Department of Food and Agriculture (now the Department of Agricultural Resources - MDAR).