

Comments on AB2892

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I understand this is a difficult issue before the committee today. I empathize with the difficulty of your decision. Money is not an easy thing to lose. And I think everyone acknowledges that this entire problem is not about a biological pest, but it's about trade and trade policy. But you cannot rob Peter to pay Paul. You cannot trade people's rights for corporate profits. We cannot do this, no matter how badly we want to.

As of 12am this morning, 22,341 California residents have signed the petition for voter consent. Of those, 3,500 signatures have been received in the last two days alone.

Why should you vote to give people a say in what happens to their own bodies? How about because these 22,000 people, along with the rest of California deserve it.

The People deserve it to protect their health.

On April 4th, 2008, Barbara Heintzelman of Fresno signed the petition and said:

I don't appreciate nor want any more poisons put in our air!! This is fumigation without representation!!

The People deserve it to protect the preciousness of life.

On February 18th, 2008 Sarah Wiggett of Chico signed the petition and said:

Living in a farming community I share the concern of the agricultural industry at the appearance of the light brown apple moth. I can understand the need for spray, but only if the spray is contained to specific areas. Aerial spraying of communities is irresponsible. To accept that nose and throat irritation are okay symptoms among the population breathing the spray is appalling. No one knows the long term effects of this spray on humans and to use the citizens of California as guinea pigs is immoral.

Sarah is right. Not only is using people as guinea pigs without their consent immoral, it is against widely accepted human rights norms all the way back to the Nuremberg code right after World War II.

California codifies the Nuremberg code in the California Health and Safety code.

Section 24171 states that experimentation shall be undertaken with due respect to the preciousness of human life and the right of individuals to determine what is done to their own bodies.

The Legislature recognizes in the same section The Nuremberg Code of Ethics in experimentation and acknowledges that there is, and will continue to be, a growing need for protection for citizens of the state from unauthorized, needless, hazardous, or negligently performed medical experiments on human beings.

The People deserve it to restore their faith in government.

On February 19th, 2008 Linda Swanson of Bakersfield signed the petition and said:

The government doesn't give a damn if they poison everyone

On November 2, 2007 Rodolfo Quiroz of Los Angeles signed the petition and said:

Shame..Shame on all of you elected officials and those of you who will allow this to happen. It is amazing and horrifying to think that despite the countless incidents of environmental disasters in California alone, our elected officials continue to play Russian Roulette with the lives of so many. ... Just remember on Saturday morning, while you sit with your kids to have breakfast and reflect on the choices you make that affect so many, just remember that soon enough consequences will surface and you and everyone involved will have to answer to those greatly affected by your carelessness.

The People deserve it because the current program has questionable efficacy.

On February 18th, 2008 Kerri Hanson of Bakersfield signed the petition and said:

Aerial spraying is not effective...it reaches more people than crops. Please use effective, safe ways to apply pesticides to crops -- may be more expensive for farmers, but worth it to save harm to humans.

On March 2nd, 2008 Gary Ruiz of Sonoma signed the petition and said:

Spray your kids and elders and then get back to me. This is not rocket science and is also not the only or best solution.

The People deserve it because they care about this world we share.

On February 29, 2008 Gail Larrick of Cloverdale signed the petition and said:

Please explore all possible alternatives to aerial spraying--preferably organic approaches. The air, the land, the water are polluted nearly beyond their capacity for recovery. Please do not add to the burden of what must be done to preserve

and protect these life-supporting resources. Economic issues are far less relevant than human needs in this situation. If appropriate methods do not exist, invent them. The time has come for creative action rather than the use of outmoded and life-threatening practices if we are to continue to live on this good Earth. Thank you.

You have heard the OEHHA say they could not find a link to the health complaints and the spray. They did not find a link, but more importantly, they could not prove otherwise. The risk is too great. One child, Jack Wilcox, almost died. His story was told in the San Francisco Chronicle on April 7, 2008 in a front page story.

The child's father, Tim Wilcox, signed the petition for consent as signer # 212 on October 22, 2007. In his comments he said:

My child nearly died from the first round of spraying. He now has asthma from exposure to this chemical cocktail (sic). As a proud member of our armed forces, I can honestly say that this is not what I fight for...I do not fight for the right of special interests to poison my family. This is CRIMINAL and needs to be stopped.

Statistically, there are perhaps 30 more children that could respond similarly if the spray is expanded to 3 million people. Is the state prepared to unilaterally make the decision to accept these consequences? Did OEHHA even contact Tim Wilcox?

I ask, did OEHHA call Sabrina Hines, of Del Rey Oaks who signed the petition on November 6, 2007 and said:

There is significant proof within my own household that the spraying is harmful to our health. My sister developed a sore throat and breathing problems, my cat has stopped eating and drinking and I have a rash on my back that appeared after I rode my bike to school the morning after the spraying over my house. All three of these things occurred directly after the spraying occurred.

On February 19th, 2008 Tracie Warden-Denga of Modesto signed the petition and said:

Please require safety to be PROVEN before exposing citizens to poison! The burden of proof should not be on those injured to prove that they were injured by the chemical but on the chemical companies to prove SAFETY FIRST!

Why should you NOT vote for this? The answer is simple, to protect money.

We will likely hear lots of reasons why business interests are against this bill. In the end, the choice is simple. You choose. Money. Or People.