

U.S. EPA Office of Pesticide Programs Funding Levels

Position: OPP is vital to the pest management industry. It ensures the availability of valuable pesticides that protect public health and property. Additionally, OPP's stamp of approval through registration provides the public and pest management professionals with confidence that these tools are safe and effective. New pest-transmitted diseases are being identified at a rapid pace, and we need to ensure that EPA has a well-funded stakeholder-driven process in place to register pesticides. We urge you to reauthorize PRIA (H.R. 1029) and protect OPP funding levels under the new administration.

Synopsis: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for evaluating and registering pesticides in the U.S. pursuant to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). The EPA Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) is tasked with implementing the process of registration and registration-review of pesticides. The registration process involves examining the proposed pesticide ingredients, application site, amount, frequency, timing of use, and storage/disposal requirements. EPA then conducts extensive peer-reviewed human health and ecological risk assessments to confirm that the proposed use will not result in unreasonable adverse effects on humans, the environment, or non-target species. The extensive and lengthy process is expensive and requires adequate funding by the federal government.

Part of funding the registration process conducted by OPP since 2003 has been accomplished by continually reauthorizing the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act (PRIA). PRIA put in place a fee schedule for pesticide manufacturers to create a more predictable and effective evaluation scheme for affected pesticide decisions and couples the collection of individual fees with specific timelines. It was also intended to expedite the review periods for reduced-risk applications, though this goal has not fully been achieved. PRIA is set to expire in 2017 without reauthorization from the federal government. In February, Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL) introduced H.R. 1029, the Pesticide Registration Enhancement Act of 2017 (PRIA 4). The bill has since passed the House Agriculture Committee with bipartisan support and as end users of EPA approved pesticides, we urge the expeditious passage of this non-controversial legislation.

In addition to PRIA, the remaining funding for OPP is annually approved by Congress through the appropriations process. Since sequestration in 2013, annual funding for OPP has dropped from \$136 million to \$120 million. This significant drop has led to a lack of resources and delays in pesticide registration and review. EPA officials indicated that the average approval time of a pesticide product has increased by more than 200 days as a result of the lower funding levels. This is unacceptable as there is little to no way to predict when new technology will be brought to market. The delay is problematic because we also have to adjust our business operations to account for these tools, and hire and train our employees in accordance with EPA labels and product use patterns. Adequately funding the EPA will lead to a more timely, deliberate and predictable registration and registration-review process. This gives our industry the ability to know which pesticides will be available now and in the future.

Approving new technology and retaining current products is essential for pesticide applicators who are relied upon by the public to protect public health and property by controlling dangerous pests. Furthermore, streamlining product registration and registration-review allows professionals the ability to continue providing the high level of service the American public is accustomed to, ensuring that hospitals, restaurants, food processing facilities and homes are protected from the effects of dangerous pests.