Home Rule Petition Talking Points

In Favor of Home Rule Petitions to Authorize Municipalities to Restrict SGARs on Private Property in their Town or City

- I am (YOUR NAME] from [YOUR TOWN/CITY]. I am a concerned citizen and a member of [LOCAL RESCUE WILDLIFE GROUP NAME] in support of the Home Rule Petition [BILL NUMBER and NAME].

- [LOCAL GROUP NAME] has [X} supporters and we are closely following the legislative movement on regulating rodent poisons.

- I'm proud to support this important home rule petition for my community to employ more effective and less dangerous methods of pest control that rodent poison.

- I support legislation that promotes integrated pest management and local control of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGAR), or "rodent poison", which poisons not only the mice and rats in our basements and dumpsters but the hawks, owls, coyotes, and other wildlife that feed on them. The widespread secondary poisoning of predators has devastating ecological effects, even impacting species like the Bald Eagle, undermining decades of efforts to recover raptors from the impacts of DDT.

- As you surely know, state law explicitly preempts cities and towns from regulating pesticide and rodenticide use on private property, which is why more and more towns are seeking this exception through home rule. As you may not know, the original rationale for that preemption was the result of organizing done by many environmental and community organizations in the 1980s to curb the use of pesticides through the town-by-town adoption of a model bylaw. The legislature, heavily influenced by the pesticide industry, felt it would be burdensome for applicators to comply with a different set of rules in each town, and passed a law prohibiting municipalities from having more stringent rules. Many of the considerations in favor of local preemption of pesticide and herbicide regulation have not changed.

- However, state-level inaction in the face of rampant over-reliance on rodent poison and overwhelming evidence of its harmful impact on wildlife has led to a situation where communities feel that we do not have the tools to safely and responsibly manage and control rodents, and we agree.

- Moreover, rodent control and SGAR use is completely appropriate for local regulation, as residents and businesses work at the neighborhood level with their boards of health, inspectional services offices, public works departments, and other municipal and institutional landowners on managing rodents, and keeping them out of the places we live, work, shop, dine, and recreate.

- The residents of my community, [CITY OR TOWN NAME] have spoken clearly and overwhelmingly that we want property owners in our community to employ more effective and wildlife-safe rodent control alternatives. We have seen that rodent poisons are too often the first line of defense, and we've seen their impacts on nature.

- There are currently 31 towns/cities that have filed Home Rule Petitions to request authority to restrict ARs on private property.

- The growing number of Home Rule Petitions on this issue reflect the state's inaction, even in the face of overwhelming evidence and support, and towns and cities across the Commonwealth have taken matters into their own hands by seeking to carve out a specific and narrow exception for SGARs to the Chapter 132B pre-emption from the Legislature. They feel that rodent control is, at its core, a municipal function, and that the state is not granting them the tools to safely and responsibly manage rodents in their communities. We agree.

- **"The Ask"**: We know that more advocacy is needed to get these bills into law! We would ask that you help advance our Home Rule Petition [BILL NUMBER and NAME] by advocating for it with your colleagues and making it a priority when speaking with legislative leadership."

- Thank you for your consideration. [RE-STATE YOUR NAME AND TOWN, AND LEAVE YOUR PHONE NUMBER IF LEAVING A VOICEMAIL.]