IOWA CITIZENS FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
ACTION FUND

2001 Forest Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50311
ph 515.282.0484
Fx 515.283.0031
www.cciaction.org

About Bayer's Cancer Gag Act

We're asking decision makers to vote no on any legislation that would give immunity to pesticide manufacturers like Bayer-Monsanto.

- Also known as the pesticide immunity bill, the Cancer Gag Act would grant pesticide corporations immunity from lawsuits filed by Iowans with cancer, Parkinson's disease, and birth defects caused by exposure to pesticides.

- The courts are the only legal remedy available to Iowans harmed by pesticides. Americans have the right to prove their claims before a jury. This bill would deny Iowans that right while citizens of other states receive damages for their injuries.

- This bill is backed by Bayer, the sole US maker of glyphosate. Legislators must represent the people of Iowa, not grant special favors to multibillion-dollar multinational corporations.

- Scientific studies, international scientific bodies, and courts all link glyphosate with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Iowans are facing a cancer crisis. Iowa now has the second highest rate of cancer in the US and is the only state where cancer rates are increasing.

- Iowa farmers spread more pesticides than any other state. The rate of glyphosate application has skyrocketed since the introduction of Roundup Ready corn and soybeans in the 1990s. Cancer caused by exposure to environmental carcinogens like pesticides often takes decades to develop.

- Pesticide companies should stand behind their products. They will have no incentive to develop safer alternatives if there are no consequences for causing cancer. Farmers deserve options that are safe and effective.

- The Cancer Gag Act grants immunity to all pesticide companies including Chinese owned ChemChina/Syngenta, maker of paraquat which is linked with Parkinson's disease, and atrazine, an endocrine disrupter that has been linked with birth defects. Paraquat is banned in China, but not the US. Dicamba, also made by Bayer, is linked to lung, colon, liver and prostate cancer.

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Talking Points to Respond to Your Legislator

What they say: *Without this bill, Iowa farmers will lose access to glyphosate.*

Fact: No one in Iowa is proposing a ban on glyphosate this session. Bayer is projecting sales increases and planning new Roundup formulations. Iowa farmers will continue to buy the product if it is effective and safe.

What they say: *EPA rules prevent Bayer from putting a cancer warning on Roundup labels.*

Fact: The EPA relies on information supplied by Bayer to determine whether Roundup is carcinogenic. The EPA also relies on industry-funded research to claim that glyphosate doesn't cause cancer, and they have excluded independent research that contradicts those findings. EPA warning labels focus on acute risks from accidental ingestion rather than long-term risks like cancer. The state's duty to protect its citizens shouldn't be curtailed by EPA's problematic policies.

With billions in profits at stake, we can't trust Bayer to disclose everything they know to consumers or the EPA.

What they say: *The bill concerns warning labels only. It stops lawsuits against Bayer for not using a warning label that the EPA hasn't approved.*

Fact: This bill blocks Iowa victims from holding the pesticide industry accountable. Injured plaintiffs can make three claims: failure to warn, negligence, or dangerous design defect. If the State declares the warning label "sufficient", it will mean the legislature has decided the risks are acceptable and all three types of claims could be defeated in court.

What they say: *These lawsuits are frivolous.*

Fact: Cancer is a traumatic, life-threatening experience. Lawsuits are stressful and time consuming. No family would put themselves through this without the certainty that their injuries were caused by an injustice.