STATE OF NEW YORK

9094

IN SENATE

February 3, 2026

Introduced by Sen. HARCKHAM -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Environmental Conservation

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to prohibiting the use of the pesticide paraquat

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Legislative findings. 1. Paraquat or paraquat dichloride is a synthetic, nonselective contact herbicide that is a member of the bipyridylium chemical family and that kills all vegetation that it touches.

2. Paraquat was first registered in the United States in 1964, and in 1978, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) classified all paraquat products as restricted use pesticides because of paraquat's high acute toxicity and potential for poisoning.

3. Paraquat has been classified as a restricted use pesticide, and 24 currently registered pesticide products approved for use in the United States contain paraquat.

4. The Pesticide Action Network's 2024 Consolidated List of Banned Pesticides identifies 72 countries as banning the use of paraquat, including Brazil, China, Iraq, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.

5. The European Union banned paraquat in 2007 after a court determined that the relevant regulatory body had failed to apply proper procedures for evaluation of the herbicide and that the regulatory body was not properly thorough in its assessments of paraquat's effects on human and animal health.

6. As of January 9, 2026, there were no products registered for use in Canada that contain paraquat.

7. Multiple studies have demonstrated that paraquat exposure substantially increases the risk of Parkinson's disease in those exposed to the herbicide.

8. Other studies suggest a possible link with exposure to paraquat to increased risk of non-Hodgkin lymphoma, renal cancer, thyroid cancer, and childhood leukemia.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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9. In 2021, as part of a product registration review of paraquat required under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), the EPA issued an interim decision approving the continued registration of paraquat for use in the United States, despite multiple public comments objecting to approval and significant scientific evidence regarding the potential health effects of paraquat exposure.

10. Multiple parties subsequently petitioned for judicial review of the EPA's interim decision authorizing the continued registration and use of paraquat. In particular, the challenging parties contested the EPA's assessment of the increased risk of Parkinson's disease due to exposure to paraquat from volatilization during use.

11. In January 2025, after a motion from the EPA, a court placed that case in abeyance so that the EPA may reconsider its initial conclusion concerning the potential for paraquat to volatilize and to determine whether paraquat continues to meet FIFRA's registration standard.

12. The EPA's reevaluation of the risks of paraquat is expected to take years, and the EPA's further evaluation does not prohibit the continued use of paraquat during that review period.

13. Instead of waiting for EPA action on whether or how to use paraquat, the state of New York should ban the use of paraquat in order to protect New Yorkers from the known, significant health effects of exposure to paraquat.

§ 2. Section 33-1301 of the environmental conservation law is amended by adding a new subdivision 14 to read as follows:

14. a. It shall be unlawful for any person to distribute, sell, purchase, or use for any purpose any pesticide product containing paraquat dichloride or any other chemical form of paraquat.

b. As used in this section, "paraquat" means a pesticide with CAS number 4685-14-7 and any salt of that chemical, including methyl viologen (CAS number 1910-42-5) and paraquat bismethylsulfate (CAS number 2074-50-2).

§ 3. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.