

Common Sense Prevails: GOVERNOR SIGNS PREEMPTION BILL

By Monroe S. Miller

Governor Tommy Thompson initiated a sigh of relief among Wisconsin golf course superintendents when he signed into law a bill on December 14, 1993 that gives the power to regulate pesticides to state government. The legislation bans local units of government from enacting stricter regulations.

There had been indications in the weeks leading up to the signing that Thompson was unsure of what he was going to do. Strong efforts by groups like F/RoW/T, the Wisconsin Agri-Business Council, cranberry growers and similar groups helped convince the governor that the law was a good one for Wisconsin. Individual communications from many like the members of the WGCSA also helped.


Thompson signed the measure during a swing through the state that included stops in LaCrosse, Green Bay and the village of Augusta near Eau Claire. He admitted to reporters that it was a "tough call" for him because of the heavy lobbying by environmental groups.

"Generally the bill is in the right direction in helping agriculture in Wisconsin," Thompson said during the signing ceremony.

The bill, which was backed by manufacturers of agricultural chemicals and other agricultural interests, puts the regulation of pesticides in the hands of the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection rather than local units of government. The legislation was essential for the uniformity necessary across the state.

Current laws give local governments the power to pass control measures. The legislation, which has been passed in nearly all of the states surrounding us, effectively overturns that principle and returns power back to the state.

Thompson said he signed the bill to "establish a state-wide system of strong, uniform pesticide regulation." 🏌️



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