



## Capitol city: all talk. Any action?

The U.S. Capitol building is an impressive and imposing sight. A visitor to D.C. can use it as a point of reference; indeed, the city's geographic center is located in the rotunda.

Less impressive is what actually gets done in the Capitol and the surrounding office buildings. It's the world's power center, yet—save for the architecture and bargain cab fares—the place is strikingly common.

And people who work there are prone to say silly things. The Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) and National Pest Control Association had their "Day on the Hill" in March. Robert Dole told us the gulf war success could "change dramatically what happens in Congress," given Commander Bush's high approval rating. "The important thing is," said Dole, "is that if Congress says no, then he can go to the American people." So what programs will the people now support Bush on that they wouldn't have supported him on before? Regardless of his popularity, the elderly will still have an opinion on medical care, parents will still have an opinion on child care, and nobody will want more taxes.

Next, Victor Kimm, the Environmental Protection Agency's deputy assistant administrator for pesticides and toxic substances, had his say. He called pesticide regulation "something that changes over time," which couldn't be more contrary to the whole point of why we have laws in the first place.

Kimm (and others like him) also has a way of conveniently blaming "the public" and its "sensitivity to a variety of pesticide issues." How refreshing it'd be to hear a government official say that the reason for it all is to keep people on the government payroll.

The most popular buzzword in this whole pesticide legislation mess is, "sensitivity." In the past few years, more rights have been lost in the name of "sensitivity" than ever before. In this case, the sensitivity is to irrational fears fueled by misinformation.

Now it's come down to the wire. The green industry's position is clear. Self-policing works, but if federal and state laws must exist, let them be practical.

The PLCAA wants mandated certification and training for all commercial applicators, including in-house workers.

FIFRA works as a national guideline. Local jurisdiction—if given the green light by the Supreme Court—will muddy the water and put companies out of business; good companies, too, not just fly-by-nights.

Whose voice will congress hear? At this point, we can only hope for the best.

Terry McIver, managing editor

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