

Assembly Member **SANDRÉ SWANSON**

News Release

For Immediate Release:

April 8, 2010

Contact: Amy Alley

(916) 990-2134

Assembly Environmental Safety Committee Passes Swanson's Bill To Protect Children From Aerial Applications Of Pesticides

(Sacramento, Ca)— **AB 1721**, The Health and Safety School Zones Act, passed the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee this week with a 5 to 2 vote. The bill's author, Assemblymember Sandré. R Swanson (D-Oakland), made the following statement after the hearing:

"With this important vote, the Environmental Committee has expressed its agreement that the state's most valuable resource—its children—must be adequately protected from pesticide exposure. **AB 1721** is a sound public safety measure that will potentially save thousands of children from aerial spraying and drift by establishing safe buffer zones around school sites.

"I have spent many years studying the impact of pesticides on the environment and sensitive populations and carrying legislation to combat these problems. **The Health and Safety Zones Act** is a practical and simple way to protect our children from pesticides by creating consistent buffer zones around schools throughout the state.

"California has made it clear that clean air is a right and not a privilege. Many communities have recognized the unintended side effects of aerial spraying and have passed ordinances to protect their school sites. We need to follow the standards taking place within these communities and apply them statewide," concluded Assemblymember Swanson.

AB 1721 prohibits the application of restricted-use pesticides for the purposes of commercial agriculture or a state pest eradication or control program within one-half mile of a school and prohibits the application of non-restricted use pesticides for the same purposes within one-quarter mile of a school. The bill excludes local mosquito and vector control agencies from the prohibitions and exempts certain organic pesticides.

Support for the bill includes the American Lung Association, the Center for Environmental Health, the California Nurses Association, the California Public Health Association, the Sierra Club, and the California Teacher's Association, among many others.

AB 1721 will be heard by the Assembly Agriculture Committee on April 14, 2010.

###

Capitol: State Capitol - P.O. Box 942849 - Sacramento, CA 94249-0016 - **Tel:** (916) 319-2016 - **Fax:** (916) 319-2116
District: 1515 Clay Street, Suite 2204 - Oakland, CA 94612 - **Tel:** (510) 286-1670 - **Fax:** (510) 286-1888