



Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
In Support of S.445 and H.845, An Act establishing an ecologically-based mosquito
management program in the Commonwealth to protect public health
By Carolyn Lee, LWVMA Specialist on Natural Resources
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The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. Currently, the practices for control of mosquitos to prevent diseases, and sometimes just because of nuisance issues, are not coordinated across the state or even smaller regions and not using Department of Public Health (DPH) best practices. In many places, the methods have not been revised since the 1950s. Further, the option to opt out of local spraying keeps getting more restrictive every year.

The existing state mosquito control board legislation and regulations need to be fundamentally reformed to emphasize public health as the primary goal consistent with environmental protections of pollinators and other wildlife. This reform needs to include uniform sensible ways for municipalities to obtain the services they need and maintain appropriate local controls. Implementing the recommendations of the Recommendations of the Mosquito Control for the Twenty-First Century Task Force is key to achieving this improvement.

Fundamental reform of legislation governing mosquito control in Massachusetts is needed to update the programs and make them consistent with the best available public health based operating standards. The Department of Fish and Game has the expertise in ecological management for mosquito control and needs to have a key role in developing and implementing best management practices (BMP) for mosquito control. Focusing on larvae and not adults by working with municipalities to eliminate stagnant water areas through better storm water and stream flows would provide a major improvement without the health hazards of chemical spraying. In addition to this ineffectiveness of spraying to kill adults, there is the added hazard of the drums containing the insecticides being PFAS-contaminated. Airborne introduction of yet more of these chemicals into our environment is not desirable.

Adequate funding needs to be provided to continue to refine BMPs, monitoring protocols, and computerized recordkeeping to form an integrated statewide system, replacing the outdated and inefficient paper recordkeeping. With the increasing risks of mosquito-borne diseases caused by climate change, this reform cannot wait.

S.445/H.845 is a major new policy bill, being reintroduced again this session and written by those with expertise in natural resource protections and in regulatory process. The LWVMA, with 44 local Leagues from Capes Cod and Ann to the Berkshires, supports this bill and asks that you favorably report this bill out of committee.

Thank you for your consideration.