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Rob Fleming VICTORIA-SWAN LAKE MLA

## Cosmetic pesticide report fails to advance health and environmental protections - Premier breaks her promise for bi-partisan coo

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The recommendations of the Special Committee on Cosmetic Pesticides fail to address the environmental and human health concerns of British Columbians and do not live up to the commitments of the premier, says New Democrat environment critic Rob Fleming.

"New Democrats are profoundly disappointed in the outcome of this process," said Fleming, who served as the deputy chair of the committee which began meeting in June 2011. "Instead of making good on the premier's repeated promise to ban cosmetic pesticides, the Liberals have brought in minimal regulatory changes."

"Unfortunately, despite the fact that it's the right thing to do and has overwhelming support from British Columbians, the government majority on the committee has chosen to bring in status quo recommendations instead of advancing protections that 22 million Canadians in six provinces currently enjoy," said Fleming.

Noting that the Liberals simply tabled the report, without an accompanying motion to adopt which would allow debate in the legislature, Fleming said that it does a great disservice to the 8,700 British Columbians who participated in the process.

"We had an unprecedented level of public interest and participation for a legislative committee, reflecting a widespread consensus among the public and scientific community that the cosmetic use of pesticides pose an unnecessary health risk to children, pets and our water supply," said Fleming. "There are viable non-synthetic alternatives that are already available and the associated health risks of cosmetic pesticides warrants government action to reduce everyday exposure to toxins that are potentially harmful and easily misused."

Fleming noted that a patchwork of B.C. local government bylaws currently exist throughout the province with 2.6 million residents living in cosmetic pesticide-free municipalities. A number of other Canadian jurisdictions have bans or strict regulations in place, with Newfoundland and Labrador joining other provinces with bans during the time B.C.'s committee met and deliberated.

A ban on cosmetic pesticides has been urged by the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, Toxic Free Canada, the David Suzuki Foundation, and the Union of B.C. Municipalities.

"After almost a year of Special Committee meetings, the Liberal majority on the committee has recommended B.C. remain with weaker regulations than most other provinces have in place."

Since 2009, Adrian Dix and the New Democrats have introduced legislation on three occasions calling for a ban on the unnecessary use of toxic pesticides on lawns and in other places where children play.

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