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MABA Hails Plan to Streamline Agricultural Fertilizer Use, Remove Barriers to Growth

Legislature OKs measure that standardizes fertilizer use under state laws, not local rules

LANSING – The **Michigan Agri-Business Association** today hailed the Legislature’s approval of measures that ease and streamline rules on agriculture fertilizer use by ensuring that a uniform set of rules and laws at the state level – not diverse local ordinances – will govern agricultural fertilizer use.

“We applaud this legislation, which gives Michigan agriculture clear, standardized guidelines at a time when our industry operates across multiple municipal lines,” MABA President **Jim Byrum** said. “Thanks to this legislation, Michigan agriculture can continue to make full use of new technology that minimizes fertilizer application and maximizes crop yield, while following best-management practices to protect our land and water. We should let science, new technology and best practices drive Michigan agriculture, not a zip code or township boundary. That’s why it is so important to let a standardized, streamlined set of uniform state rules – not a patchwork of local rules – guide agricultural fertilizer use.”

The House and Senate have now passed House Bills 5034 and 5035, which amend a section in Michigan’s law on natural resources and environmental protection to exempt agricultural fertilizer use and application from being subject to local ordinances, which could vary significantly from one municipality to another and create inconsistencies in regulation for agriculture. The new exemption is covered under the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act’s fertilizer preemption clause, which, prior to the bills’ passage, only addressed manufacture, storage, distribution and sale, and not actual use in agricultural applications. The Senate approved the legislation last week.

“Michigan agriculture has a track record of responsible practices, and allowing local ordinances to trump commonsense state regulations would be disruptive to farmers and agri-businesses,” Byrum

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said. “Michigan’s Legislature has sent a signal that it is eager to remove barriers to growth and give Michigan agriculture the tools it needs to compete, succeed and profit in today’s economy. This is a great step forward for Michigan agriculture and MABA looks forward to these bills being signed into law by the Governor.”

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