



## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

December 6, 2010

The Hon. Robert Atkins  
President  
California Association  
of County Agriculture Commissioners  
5555 Overland Ave, Suite 3101  
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Commissioner Atkins:

I write to urge you and your colleagues to actively and aggressively enforce the recent Methyl Iodide regulations implemented by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation on December 1, 2010.

As you know, Methyl Iodide is a carcinogenic substance that has also been found to cause neurotoxicity and fetal death. Given the extraordinarily serious consequences of the misuse of this chemical, it is my belief that vigorous oversight of its use is critical to protecting the health and safety of farmers, farm workers and other members of the community.

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation has determined that safe use of Methyl Iodide requires that:

- Only State licensed pesticide applicators, who have been trained in handling Methyl Iodide, apply the chemical to fields;
- No more than 30 acres may be treated with Methyl Iodide at a time;
- All applications of Methyl Iodide must have up to a 1,400 foot buffer zone that does not cross property lines without permission or come within a half a mile of a school or hospital;
- After application, all fields must be covered with “virtually impermeable” tarps and left undisturbed by farmers, farm workers or pesticide applicators for 14 days. Only after 14 days may trained applicators cut or perforate the

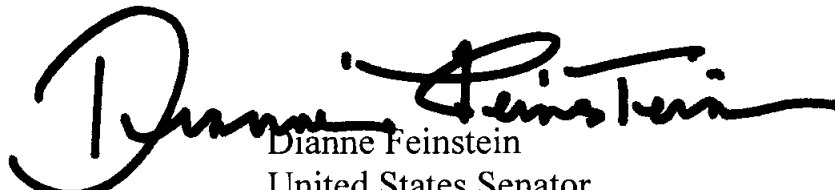
tarps; and

- After tarp cutting, another 24 hours must elapse before farm workers may enter the field and tarps can be removed.

As County Agriculture Commissioners, you and the members of your association represent the first line of defense against this toxic chemical. Given the significant adverse health effects that can result from even exposure to low-doses of Methyl Iodide, I urge you to enforce the Department's new regulations to the letter of the law and the utmost of your abilities. Nothing less than the health and safety of our constituents is at stake.

I thank you for your commitment to protect our state's farmers, farm workers and rural residents, and I look forward to working with you on this and other issues of importance to the California agriculture industry.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

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*cc: California County Agriculture Commissioners*