

Maryland PIRG

Standing Up To Powerful Interests

Maryland Public Interest Research Group
Citizen Agenda: An Update For Members Of Maryland PIRG

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Find links to resources and actions at www.marylandpirg.org

Stop The Overuse Of Antibiotics

More Progress On Antibiotics

This fall in New York City, we came together to urge the United Nations (U.N.) to take strong action to stop the overuse of antibiotics on factory farms.

The U.N. held high-level meetings at their New York headquarters, where they called the growing antibiotics problem a “fundamental threat” to global health and safety.

Experts estimate that more than 700,000 people worldwide die from antibiotic-resistant infections each year—a number that could grow to 10 million globally by 2050.

Your Voices Heard In NYC

Volunteers, members and staff drew attention to the topic by handing out educational information outside U.N. headquarters. Then, Maryland PIRG delivered a letter to the U.S. Delegation to the U.N., signed by leaders in the medical community and members of the public, pushing them to take international action.

Later that week, the U.N. General Assembly passed a declaration requiring countries to create action plans to address the global public health crisis of antibiotic resistance.

Members like you have already helped restaurants like McDonald’s, Subway and Wendy’s to stop serving meat raised on antibiotics.

Now, after more than 350,000 of you made your voices heard by urging KFC to stop overusing our life-saving medicines, we’re hopeful that KFC and other companies will hear your call to action.

Maryland PIRG is also calling on Olive Garden to join the others who have committed to stop the overuse of antibiotics in their supply chains. We’ve made some significant progress, and we’re looking forward to what we can achieve in the upcoming year. ■

Pledge To Be Toxic-Free

Protecting Our Families From Harmful Chemicals

Consumers like you are demanding that their personal care products are safe and non-toxic. That’s why Maryland PIRG launched a campaign to convince personal care companies like Procter & Gamble, Unilever and L’Oreal to Pledge to be Toxic-Free, and remove toxic chemicals from their products.

We’re exposed to dangerous chemicals in products we use daily, from shampoo to hand soap. These chemicals can disrupt developmental growth and hormones. But with your help we can phase these toxins out.



DISHING OUT A NEW FUTURE—Antibiotics Program Field Director Matt Wellington handed out educational information to hundreds of people outside the United Nations headquarters in New York City. A high-level meeting brought together experts to discuss the growing threat of the overuse of antibiotics on factory farms.

Member Resources

HELP SAVE OUR ANTIBIOTICS

Sign our petition calling on KFC to stop serving meat raised on routine antibiotics.
www.marylandpirg.org



Trouble In Toyland

Thirty Years And Counting, Toy Safety A Top Concern

We should know if the toys we buy for our children and our families are safe—whether we buy them at stores or online. That's why, for 31 years, Maryland PIRG Foundation has released the "Trouble in Toyland" report, looking at safety hazards including toxic toys, choking hazards and more to make sure your family has the resources they need to avoid dangerous toys.

in the country. Approximately 60 percent of carbon emissions from transportation comes from light-duty vehicles, like the cars and trucks we drive every day.

That's why last summer, Maryland PIRG, together with our friends at the National Resources Defense Council, submitted more than 80,000 public comments to call on the Obama administration to reduce carbon pollution from the nation's transportation system, and promote cleaner and smarter options.

With help from our members, we can continue making different traveling methods more available and efficient, like bike sharing, walking and public transportation. ■

Consumer Protection

We Teamed Up For A Lead-Free Future

This fall, Maryland PIRG Foundation co-hosted a series of seminars on lead poisoning in Baltimore, alongside Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility, the Maryland Chapter of the Academy of Pediatrics, the Maryland Sierra Club and the Maryland Environmental Health Network.

The seminar brought together health professionals and others to discuss lead exposure in Baltimore and strategies to reduce lead poisoning. There's much more work to be done to protect our children

from lead exposure in our communities. ■

Consumer Protection

Top Grassroots Lobbyist, Seventh Year Running

For 35 years, Maryland PIRG Consumer Program Director Ed Mierzwinski has been a tireless advocate for consumers like you, having a hand in many consumer advocacy projects from the creation of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to giving people access to free annual credit reports.

This fall, Ed was recognized for his efforts when he was named one of the top grassroots lobbyists in the country by *The Hill* for the seventh year in a row.

Big banks and Wall Street may have their lobbyists in the halls of power, but we have Ed. This was true when he had a front row seat to Congressional hearings on Wells Fargo's fraud accounts scandal, and when he was quoted in multiple stories about the scandal.

Consumers are also reaping the rewards of his work to help create the CFPB—the agency has returned nearly \$12 billion in relief and refunds to consumers. Having a director like Ed Mierzwinski on our team at Maryland PIRG ensures that we'll have the right people on the ground and in the room, ready to stand up for consumers like you. ■

Emma Brower



SAFETY FIRST FOR TOYS—Doctors and hospital staff joined our sister group CALPIRG Education Fund at the Children's Hospital in Los Angeles, Calif., to release the report "Trouble in Toyland" while children played with safe toys.

We've seen more than 150 regulatory actions as a result of our reports. This year, our report included information about toys that have recently been recalled and toys that were recalled but are still available on popular shopping sites. With supporters like you by our side, Maryland PIRG Foundation looks forward to another 30 years of important work to keep toys safe for our families. ■

Transportation

Taking Steps Toward Better Transportation

Last year, for the first time ever, the transportation sector overtook the electric power sector to become the largest source of carbon pollution

Invest fossil fuel free.

Because her future matters.

You should carefully consider the Funds' investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses before investing. To obtain a Prospectus that contains this and other information about the Funds, please email info@greencentury.com, call 1-800-93-GREEN, or visit www.Greencentury.com. Please read the Prospectus carefully before investing.

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Get started at GreenCentury.com/myguide

A photograph of a man with a grey beard and hair, wearing a light-colored shirt, carrying a young girl on his shoulders. The girl is smiling and has her arms raised. They are outdoors in a grassy field with hills in the background. The Green Century Funds logo is in the top right corner.

Victory: Fair Elections Win Big In Maryland

Maryland PIRG knows members like you deserve to have your voices heard, and with a new administration in Washington, D.C., we won't stop working to make important changes to our election process. Maryland PIRG saw this happening on Election Day last year when members like you spoke out against big money in politics and used their vote to make changes through introducing a citizen-funded elections program that passed in Howard County.

We Won On "Question A"

In November, Howard County voters approved "Question A" on the ballot, an amendment to establish a citizen-funded elections program for county council and county executive races to amplify the voices of county residents over wealthy special interests. The new program will provide matching funds for small donor contributions to candidates who don't accept large or corporate contributions.

Maryland PIRG co-leads the Fair Elections Maryland Coalition which helped build support for the ballot question through house parties, phone calls, and tabling at farmers markets, festivals and at the polls.

Fair Elections For MD

"By passing Question A, Howard County voters have sent a clear message that they want their elected officials to be accountable to the people of Howard County alone, not corporate interests," said Maryland PIRG Director Emily Scarr.

"Our democracy is based on the premise that every person should have equal opportunity to influence elections, and by passing Question A we're one step closer to making that vision a reality."

In addition to reducing the influence of large and corporate donations, the small donor matching program is expected to expand opportunities for people without access to large donors to run for office.

We've also seen progress made in California, Washington, South Dakota, and Washington, D.C., and we're building the momentum we need for more statewide and national reforms.

We've seen time and again what happens when the wealthiest get a stronghold on elections—that's why Maryland PIRG is working toward a more democratic process. ■



VICTORY IN MARYLAND—On Election Day, Howard County voters approved a charter amendment to bring balance to our democracy and make local government more representative and accountable to everyday people.

Thanks To You



Dear Maryland PIRG member,

A safe, healthy environment, effective consumer protections in our financial lives, a strong voice for citizens in our democracy—these aren't controversial ideas. They're the hallmarks of a great country.

But from consumer protection to a democracy of, by and for the people, many of our proudest achievements may soon be at risk.

We're ready to defend them. But we can only do that if we stand together.

That's why your support is so important. And in the weeks and months ahead, we'll face some of our toughest challenges yet.

How well we meet these challenges will decide whether the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau stays strong or exists at all, whether more companies agree to get antibiotics out of our food supply, and whether less of America's most popular herbicide, Roundup, shows up in our land, water and food.

Our work is only possible because of you. I'm looking forward to what we can achieve with members like you and all your support.

Thanks for standing with us,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Scarr".

Emily Scarr, Director
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REPORTS

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Protecting Public Health

It's Time To Ban Roundup

We shouldn't be worried that the grass our children play on or the food we eat is full of harmful chemicals. But as the use of the weed killer Roundup increases, the safety of our health and environment face an uncertain future. New research, including some done by the World Health Organization (WHO), has found that Monsanto's Roundup and other glyphosate-based herbicides could pose significant risks to human health in Maryland and across the country.

One study by the WHO linked glyphosate—the main chemical ingredient in Roundup—to cancer at high levels of exposure. However, Roundup is not just glyphosate, it's a cocktail of different chemicals and there's mounting evidence that this cocktail could be a dangerous one for our health. On top of that, Roundup has become the most widely-used agricultural



Mike Mozart via Flickr/CC BY 2.0

BAN ROUNDUP NOW—We're calling on the EPA to ban Roundup, to protect public health and the environment.

chemical in U.S. history, and it is showing up in our rivers and in our food supply. This is a staggering reality we need to change. But with members like you we can protect our families from Monsanto's dangerous herbicide. We're calling on the Environmental Protection Agency to ban Roundup unless and until it's proven safe. Visit www.BanRoundupNow.org to learn more, and sign our petition to get the EPA to ban Roundup. ■

Maryland PIRG

Maryland PIRG's Mission

When consumers are cheated or the voices of ordinary citizens are drowned out by special interest lobbyists, Maryland PIRG speaks up and takes action. We uncover threats to public health and well-being and fight to end them, using the time-tested tools of investigative research, media exposés, grassroots organizing, advocacy and litigation. Maryland PIRG's mission is to deliver persistent, result-oriented public interest activism that protects consumers, encourages a fair, sustainable economy, and fosters responsive, democratic government.

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