

## VETO MESSAGE – No. 81

TO THE SENATE:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, the following bill:

Senate Bill Number 5957, entitled:

"AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to prohibiting the application of pesticides to certain local freshwater wetlands"

NOT APPROVED

This bill would allow a local government that has implemented a freshwater wetlands protection law or ordinance in accordance with Environmental Conservation Law Section 24-0501 to adopt a local law or ordinance to prohibit the application of pesticides to wetlands it regulates.

I am committed to protecting New York's extraordinary natural resources, and will continue our efforts related to environmental conservation. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is currently working to amend its freshwater wetlands regulations and update procedural steps to implement statutory changes that were made to New York's Freshwater Wetlands Act in 2022. These updates will be significant and essential improvements to the State's wetlands protection program, safeguarding an estimated one million additional acres of unprotected wetlands habitat and helping New York adapt to increased flooding and severe storms fueled by climate change.

This bill is identical to legislation I vetoed last year, and would undermine the integrity of DEC's robust pesticide program, its wetland protection program and its protections for freshwater wetlands. Further, this bill would lead to confusion and the inconsistent application of State laws leading to unintended consequences for pesticide regulation in New York.

Therefore, I am constrained to veto this bill.

The bill is disapproved.

(signed) KATHY HOCHUL

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