

Submitter: Betsy Wosko

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure: SB525

Please support the amended version of SB 525 that would phase out gas-powered leaf blowers in cities with populations of 75,000 or more. This is the very least we can do. Gas blowers are huge polluters. Climate crisis, including global warming and especially loss of biodiversity, requires us to do as much as we can, and now. Gas blowers desiccate the soil, pollute the air and water, and kill insects and birds. Gas blowers cause permanent hearing loss, tinnitus, hyperacusis, and neurootological and psychological disorders, particularly for landscape workers. Allowing blowers is the diametric opposite of stated principles of "diversity, equity, and inclusivity," as landscape workers are often economically disadvantaged and Hispanic. To be clear, allowing people to inflict deafness upon themselves is neither tender nor kind. DEI must also apply to our nonhuman brethren and our environment. It was not so long ago that people used rakes and brooms, and allowed leaves to mulch in place, so the soil would receive nutrients, and insects would have ground cover. Today, I have noticed far fewer earthworms on sidewalks when it rains; and I have not had an insect killed on my car's windshield for three years. Although anecdotal, this disturbs me greatly, as it represents the loss of our precious ecosystem. We must do all we can; and passing this bill with the amendment should be an easy first step. It is far from enough, but it is something. Thank you.