Council of Producers & Distributors of Agrotechnology

Meeting the PRIA Funding Commitment:
Why OPP Appropriations Are Critical to Farmer Access & Food Costs

2026 CPDA POLICY BACKGROUND PAPER

THE ISSUE

America's pesticide regulatory system is one of the most rigorous and science-driven in the world. It is also a core component of the nation's food security, public health infrastructure, and agricultural supply chain. Today, more than half a billion dollars in CPDA member products remain delayed in the regulatory process. These delays slow farmer access to critical tools, increase uncertainty for manufacturers, and ultimately affect food production and affordability.

EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) has made important progress in improving internal efficiency and increasing the number of actions completed this past year. CPDA supports these modernization efforts and recognizes the commitment of OPP leadership and staff. At the same time, years of declining staffing levels, increasing scientific workload, and outdated IT infrastructure continue to constrain the agency's ability to consistently meet statutory timelines.

OPP functions as a business-critical licensing authority for American manufacturing and agriculture. When review timelines slip, innovation slows, investment decisions are delayed, and farmers lose access to critical tools needed to produce a crop.

The regulatory backlog is not simply an industry issue. It is a farmer issue, a food security issue, and a U.S. economic competitiveness issue.

The current system imbalance is driven primarily by resource constraints. CPDA supports appropriations that allow OPP to meet its statutory obligations and provide predictable regulatory decisions that support farmer access to safe and effective technologies.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS & WHY IT MATTERS

Pesticides are regulated under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). Before a product can be sold or used in the United States, it must undergo extensive scientific review evaluating human health safety, environmental effects, and product performance. These reviews require highly specialized scientific staff and often take years to complete.

Congress created the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act (PRIA) to help ensure predictable funding and review timelines. PRIA established a user-fee framework that supplements annual appropriations and provides statutory decision deadlines.

PRIA has been reauthorized multiple times on a bipartisan basis and supports not only crop protection products, but also public health pesticides, disinfectants, and biopesticides that protect communities and the environment.

THE APPROPRIATIONS REALITY

PRIA was never intended to replace congressional appropriations. Instead, user fees were designed to supplement base funding and ensure EPA had sufficient resources to meet statutory review timelines.

PRIA 5 increased industry fees by 30 percent and raised the statutory minimum appropriation trigger to approximately $166 million for OPP. However, for the past three years, congressional appropriations have remained at roughly 80 percent of the PRIA 5 minimum, creating a structural imbalance between the fees paid by registrants and the services delivered by the regulatory program. This imbalance directly contributes to delays and backlog risk. Looking ahead, maintaining funding at levels that meet or exceed the PRIA 5 minimum remains essential.

PROGRESS MADE, WORK REMAINING

EPA has taken meaningful steps to improve performance, including process modernization and increased regulatory throughput. These efforts are important and should continue.

However, structural challenges remain. Scientific staffing shortages, increasing workload complexity, expanding data requirements, and legacy IT constraints continue to limit long-term program stability.

Without appropriate funding, efficiency gains alone cannot offset these structural challenges.

CPDA POLICY PERSPECTIVE

CPDA supports funding levels that meet or exceed the PRIA 5 minimum appropriation trigger of $166 million and provide OPP with the staffing, technology, and scientific resources needed to meet statutory review timelines.

Predictable regulatory timelines allow companies to invest in research and development, support domestic manufacturing, and ensure farmers maintain access to safe, effective, and environmentally responsible pest management tools.

CONCLUSION

The United States maintains a global gold-standard pesticide regulatory system built on science, transparency, and accountability. Maintaining that system requires stable funding, predictable review timelines, and continued investment in scientific capacity.

Ensuring the long-term strength of OPP supports farmers, protects public health, strengthens supply chains, and reinforces America's leadership in agricultural innovation.

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