



## Tackling Corporate Power Head On

### How the Trump era lifts the veil on undue industry influence

by Kristin S. Schafer

We know corporations already have much more power over our food system than they should, particularly in Washington, DC. Monsanto's wildly inappropriate influence over the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) review of glyphosate's links to cancer is just the most recent example.

Now, the new administration is plowing forward with some astonishing choices to lead our federal agencies—nominees who will ramp up corporate influence over policy in deeply troubling ways.

First off, the proposed Trump cabinet boasts more billionaires than any in history. Many of the nominees have publicly denounced the mission of the agency they've now been chosen to lead, and most have direct ties to the fossil fuel industry or Wall Street. The new EPA administrator, Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt, previously sued that agency more than a dozen times on behalf of the oil and gas industry. He has also rolled back enforcement of clean air and water protections in his state, and calls climate change an "unsettled debate."

Several cabinet nominees have been narrowly confirmed; almost all have generated unprecedented pushback. As these controversial picks take office, our government agencies—established to protect the public interest—will be led by people whose top interest is maximizing short-term profit.

The new administration has made it crystal clear that they won't be putting the health and well-being of farmworkers, farmers or rural families anywhere near the top of their agenda.

#### High stakes

In the face of these troubling developments, we'll be ramping up our efforts to *reclaim the future of food and farming*. That's not just a spiffy tagline here at PAN—it reflects our understanding that "Big Ag" and the "Big 6" (likely soon to be the "Big 3") pesticide/seed corporations have too much control of our food system, and they're steering it in entirely the wrong direction.

The fact is, these corporations aren't likely to benefit much from thriving local food systems. They won't see increased market share from diverse, resilient cropping systems that rely on ecological balance. And their shareholders aren't those most directly impacted by use of unnecessary, health-harming chemicals.

But the rest of us will benefit mightily from these shifts.

So going forward, PAN will continue to aggressively challenge industry's control of our food system—fighting further consolidation of the

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# States Leading the Way

## As Team Trump stacks the cabinet with corporate cronies, leaders in some states are forging healthy and sustainable paths forward

In key states across the country, PAN is working alongside those most directly impacted by industrial agriculture to change both policy and practice. Meanwhile, Monsanto and the rest of the “Big 6” pesticide/seed corporations remain deeply committed to keeping U.S. agriculture on the pesticide treadmill, and continue to invest heavily at local, state and federal levels to keep pushing their products. But PAN and our partners are pushing back—and we’re making real progress.

### Here are some of the exciting changes afoot in agricultural states:

#### Minnesota

In August 2016, Minnesota leaders announced the strongest plan in the nation to protect pollinators from pesticides. PAN helps ensure that the state follows through with thorough implementation and legislative action to make Minnesota a true leader nationwide in protecting honey bees, native bees, butterflies and other vital pollinators from hazardous pesticides. With a coalition of beekeepers, farmers and rural residents, PAN is building public pressure to call for legislative change. PAN organizer Lex Horan is also one of 15 members of the newly formed Governor’s Committee on Pollinator Protection.

#### Iowa

In February, PAN accompanied the Iowa Farmers Union (IFU) to Des Moines for its annual lobby day. IFU continues to be a close partner in our statewide work to protect farmers from the harms of pesticide drift. After winning faster agency response times for farms experiencing crop damage from drifting pesticides last year, PAN and partners are continuing to push the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) to create an online incident reporting system for pesticide drift, among other regulatory changes.

#### Hawai‘i

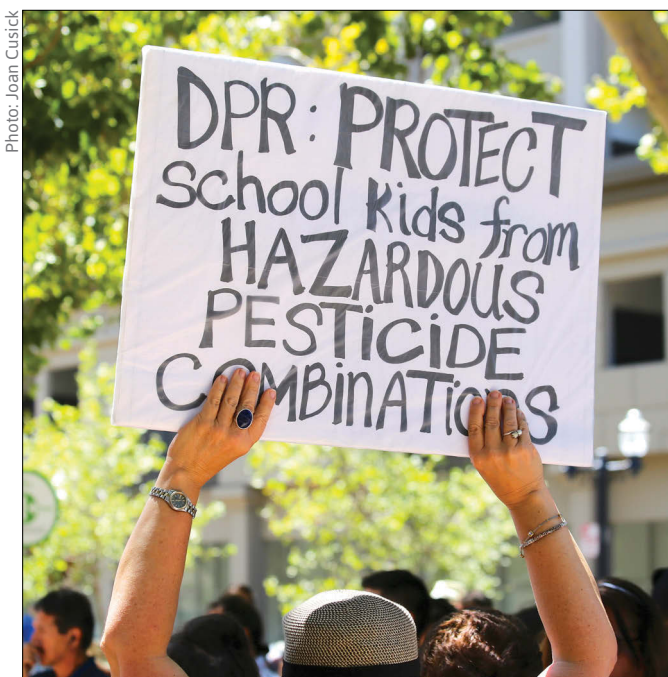
In Hawai‘i, PAN is supporting a dozen pieces of legislation that would establish protective “buffer zones” around schools threatened by pesticide drift, require mandatory pesticide-use reporting by the biotech industry, phase out all uses of the child-harming pesticide chlorpyrifos, better protect the ocean and sensitive waterways from pesticide contamination, add a much needed environmental toxicologist to the state staff, restrict the use of glyphosate and bee-harming neonicotinoids, and more. Whew!

While we don’t expect all of the bills to pass, we are excited to be part of a coalition that is changing the conversation and the political possibilities on the ground.

#### California

In California’s rural, agricultural areas, students are too often exposed to chemicals drifting on the wind from neighboring farms. Several of the drift-prone pesticides most commonly used near schools have been linked to cancer. PAN is working with a statewide coalition of groups, representing teachers, parents, farmers and farmworkers, to protect school kids from harmful pesticide drift. Through a variety of tactics, we are keeping the pressure on the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) to establish an around-the-clock, one-mile buffer zone around schools in rural areas. —🌱

**Stay in the loop!** Go to [www.panna.org/signup](http://www.panna.org/signup) to receive action alerts and updates on how you can plug in.



PAN joined teachers, parents and health professionals in Sacramento to urge the California Department of Pesticide Regulation to protect school kids from agricultural pesticides. We are continuing to press for a one-mile, pesticide-free buffer zone around schools—particularly for chemicals known to drift.



# Introducing Tiare Lawrence

## Community leader working with PAN to get Hawai'i off the pesticide treadmill

In Hawai'i, agrichemical corporations like Monsanto and DuPont/Pioneer have a history of taking over fertile farmland to test their new genetically engineered (GE) crops—and the corresponding pesticides. These test fields receive regular, repeated applications of health-harming pesticides like atrazine, paraquat and chlorpyrifos. The fields are often near schools, homes or health care facilities.



For many years, PAN has supported community-led efforts to halt the use of health-harming pesticides on GE test fields across the islands. New PAN organizer Tiare Lawrence is a native Hawaiian community leader who brings a deep understanding of the impacts of industrial agriculture in local areas. She explains that the corporate takeover began long ago:

Five sugar barons overthrew our sovereign nation and imprisoned Hawai'i's reigning monarch Queen Liliuokalani in her own palace—threatening war and bloodshed on her people and ultimately forcing the annexation. Industrial agriculture resulted in water theft from rural communities, leaving over 115 streams bone dry in East Maui alone. Generational families were forced to leave their homelands and stop the practice of their native culture. My family was directly impacted, our lands stolen, our language almost lost. Today the same companies continue to exploit our natural resources for corporate profit.

Farmworkers and residents of communities adjacent to GE test fields in Hawai'i—especially children—are most at risk from drifting pesticides and contaminated water. Tiare would like to see an entirely different approach to agriculture across the islands, one that prioritizes soil health over chemical inputs:

Regenerative agriculture requires ongoing and diverse fertility strategies. Manufacturing biochar, effective

microorganisms, compost and other necessary soil fertility amendments will help reduce the need for pesticides. We could start by funding a regional nutrient cycling center to build healthy soil and lower the cost of farming inputs.

For those of us not living in Hawai'i, there are several ways we can support this important work:

Send in testimony and sign petitions for legislative bills we are working on. Visitors from the continent can also help by shopping locally and supporting our restaurants who use primarily local ingredients.

Tiare's vision for a just, healthy food system for her community—and beyond—is rooted in Hawaiian tradition:

The Ahupua'a system was a land and sea tenure system where local communities and resource systems were organized. Typically an ahupua'a encompassed an entire watershed from mountain to sea. The success of the ahupua'a system was enabled by a high level of sophistication and complexity of knowledge developed by Kānaka Maoli (Hawaiian nationals). Strict rules for resources were enforced such as rotating closures of local fisheries, regulating water use, and harvesting and planting with the moon calendar. This system was designed to ensure a constant supply of materials and resources.

PAN is thrilled to have Tiare on our team, and we're looking forward to the legislative work we can accomplish together for a healthy, pesticide-free Hawai'i. 🌱

### Sustain PAN's Work—Give Monthly

When you join PAN's Sustainers Circle, you become part of a vital group that donates each month to fund grassroots science, collaboration with frontline communities and policy change.

We rely on consistent support from Sustainers to work towards a healthy, fair and resilient system of food and farming.

Become a Sustainer today by going to [www.panna.org/give-monthly](http://www.panna.org/give-monthly).



**ABOUT PAN** PAN works to create a just, thriving food system, working with those on the frontlines to tackle the pesticide problem—and reclaim the future of food and farming. One of five regional centers worldwide, PAN North America links local and international consumer, labor, health, environment and agriculture groups into an international citizens' action network. Together, we challenge the global proliferation of pesticides, defend basic rights to health and environmental quality, and work to ensure the transition to a just and viable food system.

pesticide/seed corporations, and shining a spotlight on the most egregious corporate shenanigans in the years ahead. We expect there will be many.

### A bigger battle

We know we won't be able to convince the corporate lobbyists and science deniers taking the helm in Washington, DC, to help us build the healthy, resilient and fair system of food and farming we so urgently need.

So we'll be moving on without them, building on our core strengths: coalition organizing, grassroots science and strategic communications. In addition to challenging corporate control, we will:

- Increase our state-based policy work, rooted in priorities identified by those most directly harmed by pesticides. We've already made important progress here, and we can keep winning.
- Demand that policy decisions at all levels of government are based on independent science, and expose efforts to undermine scientific integrity.
- Stand with those most at risk from what appears to be a systematic effort to roll back civil and human rights across the country.

Yes, Team Trump, pesticides are bad for you. So is science denial, undue corporate influence and threats to basic civil rights. Our efforts to build a healthy, fair food system together will be more challenging—and more critical—than ever before. —

**Speak up!** Go to [www.panna.org/NoMerger](http://www.panna.org/NoMerger) and urge Congress to stop Monsanto and Bayer from joining forces. Corporations already have too much control over food and farming.

### The Science

*for your conversations about pesticides*

Given increased ties to corporate interests at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), we are watching these pesticide processes very closely:

- **Chlorpyrifos:** After years of inaction, EPA has been court ordered to phase out remaining uses of this neurotoxic insecticide by the end of March. Known to be particularly damaging to children's developing nervous systems, it was first banned for home use in 2001—while thousands of pounds continue to be applied in agricultural fields every year.
- **Glyphosate:** Under direct pressure from Monsanto, an epidemiologist who had previously studied glyphosate—and spoken about concerning findings—was removed from the agency's Scientific Advisory Panel reviewing the herbicide's connection to cancer. World Health Organization cancer researchers determined that glyphosate, the main ingredient in Monsanto's RoundUp, is a "probable" carcinogen while EPA has yet to release the findings of their Scientific Advisory Panel in December.



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