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Media Release

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY LAUNCHED INTO CHEMICAL WATCHDOG'S PARAQUAT DECISION

Parkinson's Australia has welcomed the establishment of a parliamentary inquiry into a government watchdog's failure to ban a herbicide that is linked to Parkinson's Disease and has been banned in 70 countries.

After three decades of reviews and mounting scientific studies, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) announced in June that it would not ban the chemical paraquat, opting only for tighter controls.

However, following Parkinson's Australia's advocacy campaign, a parliamentary inquiry into the decision will commence.

Senator David Pocock successfully launched an inquiry into the APVMA's decision to continue the use of paraquat in Australia. He did this today (Tuesday 8 September) with support from the Greens and the Coalition.

The inquiry will look into the evidence and relationship between paraquat and Parkinson's.

Parkinson's Australia and Senator Pocock's office will continue to work closely together in the lead-up to the inquiry.

Parkinson's Australia CEO Olivia Nassaris welcomed the launch of the inquiry and vowed to continue campaigning for a ban on paraquat.

"Parkinson's Australia thanks Senator Pocock and is grateful for the support he received for this inquiry," Ms Nassaris said.

"We cannot bury our heads in the sand about the use of paraquat and the evidence that shows its toxicity in neurons.

"Why else have about 70 countries so far, including the UK, the European Union, China - and just in July, India, - all banned the use of the chemical?

"The incidence of Parkinson's is projected to triple by 2050, putting pressure on the health system and economy.

"We have to do something to stop it."

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