Explanation:
This bill authorizes local governments with wetland protection law or ordinance to prohibit the use of pesticides on those wetlands. Reducing the use of toxic chemicals around these critical natural resources will protect clean water across the state.

Wetlands provide many benefits to people and the environment. They filter out pollutants, slow erosion, and serve as natural buffers against increasingly extreme flooding caused by climate change. They also provide important habitat and spawning and nesting grounds for fish, birds and other wildlife.

As of 2013, 73 local governments have enacted local laws to protect wetlands, which must be at least as stringent as NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) wetland regulations. The Town of East Fishkill, for example, protects all wetlands larger than half an acre within its boundaries.

Unfortunately, DEC may allow some uses of harmful pesticides in and around wetlands that it regulates across the state. This bill will ensure that if local governments conclude it is necessary to further restrict pesticide use or to expand the list of pesticides subject to regulation, they will have the full legal authority to do so.

Given how important wetlands are to the health of New York's people and environment, our state should take every measure to ensure that pesticides do not damage these valuable resources.

Summary:
This bill amends the environmental conservation law to allow local governments with local wetland laws or ordinances to prohibit the use of pesticides to wetlands under their jurisdiction.