



Office of The Attorney General
State of Connecticut

**TESTIMONY OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
BEFORE THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 13, 2007**

I appreciate the opportunity to support Senate Bill 7096, An Act Concerning Pesticide Applications at Schools and the Use of Environmentally Sensitive Cleaning and Maintenance Products in Schools.

This proposal expands the current restrictions on elementary school pesticide use to middle and high schools. The legislation also requires the Commissioner of Public Health to adopt regulations to require all public and private schools to use cleaning products that have minimal adverse impact on children's health and the environment.

Pesticides by nature are purposely and effectively toxic. They are specifically, expertly designed to kill living things -- regarded as pests. In human beings, exposure to pesticides may do severe long-term harm, including cancer and nerve damage. They are particularly perilous to pregnant women. The dangers of pesticides are so well-documented that federal law regulates such chemicals and requires special health warning labels on packages containing them. In Connecticut, we regulate pesticide application and discourage the use of pesticides in schools.

This legislation would reduce exposure to pesticides by consistently applying to all schools the prohibition on pesticides use. The toxins in pesticides are particularly dangerous to nervous systems and health of children. There are effective non-toxic measures to combat pest infestations in lawns at schools, which the current prohibition encourages.

House Bill 7096 would facilitate the regulation of pesticide use on lawns by establishing one standard for all schools under a local board of education.

Further, House Bill 7096 establishes a policy of reducing children's exposure to harmful cleaning chemicals when other less harmful but as effective products are available.

I urge the committee's favorable consideration of House Bill 7096.