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**H.B. 7096 AN ACT CONCERNING PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS AT SCHOOLS
AND THE USE OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE CLEANING AND
MAINTENANCE PRODUCTS IN SCHOOLS.**

To extend the ban on the application of lawn care pesticides to all schools, and to require the adoption of regulations regarding the use of environmentally sensitive cleaning and maintenance products in preschools and schools.

**To: Chair Senator Thomas Gaffey, Chair Representative Andrew Fleischmann and
Members of the Education Committee:**

My name is Nancy Alderman and I am President of Environment and Human Health, Inc. a non-profit organization comprised of nine members who are physicians, public health professionals and policy experts. We research areas where the environment is harming human health and try to bring about policy changes that will better protect all of us.

Environment and Human Health, Inc. sees this Bill as a very important step for the protection of all school children – K-12 and we are testifying for its passage. We all know that lawn-care pesticides are toxic and exposures to them can be especially harmful to children. Some pesticides are neuro-toxins, some are carcinogens, some cause cell mutations and some affect immune systems.

The State Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEP) just fined Ecolab for a half million dollars for there improper application of pesticides. In that settlement the DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy said, “Given the nature of pesticides and the risks they pose, our state laws and regulations carefully spell out how they must be used, how employees must be supervised and what kinds of records must be kept. Ecolab did not comply with these requirements.”

This settlement not only shows the seriousness in which the state sees the risks of pesticides but it also shows how pesticide applications need careful supervision and continual oversight.

There is no way that the state can give continual, oversight to 169 school districts - all of which have many schools within their districts – meaning we have hundreds and hundreds of schools that need to be monitored. The best and safest thing to be done to protect our school children is to ban pesticides on the grounds of schools K-12.

Playing fields should be given a three-year period where they are allowed to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) methods before they go organic. The three years will give the playing fields the time they need to be slowly weaned off their chemical dependence and will allow them to remain healthy as they become pesticide free. The dates in this Bill are not correct however - as they reflect the three years that was given in 2005 to the Grammar School fields when that Bill was passed.

This new Bill should give the new schools that were not included in the older Bill the same three years to bring their athletic fields from chemical dependence to organic methods. The three years of allowing IPM on athletic fields becomes 2008 to 2010.

Including “environmentally sensitive cleaning products”, and I would include the wording “least toxic cleaning products” as well, is a wonderful thing to do for our school children – many of whom suffer from asthma and other allergies - which the more toxic cleaning products exacerbate.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as well as many non-profit organizations, well recognize the harmful effects of toxic cleaning products on human health. EPA and other groups have devoted many websites to disseminating information on least toxic cleaning alternatives in their efforts to better protect children in schools and adults at home.

Environment and Human Health, Inc. urges you to pass this Bill as it stands - with the one amendment that changes the dates, allowing newly added schools to treat their athletic fields using IPM methods until 2010 instead of 2008. This would allow a necessary transition period.

Thank you

Nancy Alderman, President

Environment and Human Health, Inc.

February 13, 2007