



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Education Committee  
Public Hearing Testimony  
Tuesday February 13, 2007

**CO-CHAIRMAN**  
REGULATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

**MEMBER**  
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Dear Senator Gaffey, Senator Herlihy, Senator Fonfara, Representative Fleischmann, Representative Hovey, Representative Genga and Education Committee Membership:

Dear Senator Gaffey, Senator Herlihy, Senator Fonfara, Representative Fleischmann, Representative Hovey, Representative Genga and Education Committee Membership:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on House Bill 7096 "AN ACT CONCERNING PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS AT SCHOOLS AND THE USE OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE PRODUCTS IN SCHOOLS." This bill will extend the ban on the application of lawn care pesticides to all schools and require the adoption of regulations regarding the use of environmentally sensitive cleaning and maintenance products in preschools and schools.

Last year our Governor issued an Executive Order effectively banning the use of all toxic cleaning solutions and pesticides at State Agencies and Institutes of Higher Learning. The Governor felt that with many non-toxic cleaning solutions and pesticides on the market, there was no need for the public to be unnecessarily exposed to harmful toxins. I have been very supportive of this Executive Order, but have come to ask this Committee to take it one step further and apply that same ban to our schools.

I believe this ban should be extended to our local schools. If it was important enough to protect state employees and young adults from exposure to chemicals, why not children. How many of you here ate dirt or grass when you were a kid? More generally, how many of us handled grass and dirt and didn't wash your hands after? I bet we all did and I bet none of us were thinking about what had been sprayed on that grass or dirt.

We are protecting the adults with the Governor's Executive Order, but not our children. . . .  
Many years ago when my aide was in kindergarten, one of the school janitors left a bottle of window cleaner on a shelf in the classroom. Mistaking it for a squirt gun, one of his classmates sprayed my aide in the eye, effectively blinding him for a few days. Could this have been prevented if the janitor had been more careful, yes, but we have to consider that incidents like this can happen. It is important for use to take every precaution, so that when kids aren't demonstrating good judgment or playing safe, the negative consequences of these actions are minimized.

The Governor has already demonstrated good judgment in banning toxic cleaning solutions and pesticides at certain public facilities. I ask that this Committee please demonstrate some of its own good judgment and extend this ban to protect those we need it most.