

Connecticut Environmental Council

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Written Testimony of
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Raised Bill No. 1020, An Act Concerning Pesticide Applications of Child Day Care Centers and Schools

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General Assembly's Environment Committee

Good afternoon Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and member of the Environment Committee, my name is Dick Tice, I am the President of the Connecticut Environmental Council (CTEC). CTEC supports Senate Bill 1020, An Act Concerning the Pesticide Applications of Child Day Care Centers and Schools. CTEC is an association supported by the Connecticut Grounds Keepers Association, the Connecticut Irrigation Contractors Association, the Connecticut Golf Course Superintendents Association, and the Connecticut Arborist.

Over the past three years Connecticut contractors have been applying lawn care pesticides on school athletic fields and playgrounds according to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan at both public and private schools. By state statute IPM calls for "the judicious use of pesticides to maintain a pest population at or below an acceptable level, while decreasing the use of pesticides." As a result of IPM's judicious methods of applying lawn care pesticides, over the past three years tons of active ingredients have been withheld from use on school grounds. IPM has proven to be safe, reliable and affordable way of applying lawn care pesticide, while protecting the financial investments towns have made in athletic fields and school grounds.

The Environmental Protection Agency has recently weighed in on this issue by recommending "that schools use IPM to reduce pesticide risk and exposure to children. Put simply, IPM is a safer and frequently less costly option for effective pest management in a school community." The EPA plan calls for IPM in all schools in the United States by 2015. The Connecticut General Assembly should be commended for the establishment of IPM program for schools during the 2006 session, a full 9 years ahead of the federal government's goal for schools.

In conclusion, CTEC would support the removal of the July 1, 2009 sunset making IPM permanent for all public and private schools in the state. However, in the spirit of compromise we would support the one year extension of the IPM program which will give DEP and their ad hoc committee on pesticide use, time to develop standards for the continued judicious use of lawn care pesticides to protect against pest populations.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify, I'd be glad to answer any questions you may have at this time.