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State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Representative Lonnie Reed
Testimony in support of HB 6496
AN ACT CONCERNING GREEN CLEANING PRODUCTS IN SCHOOLS

How much evidence does one need to know that kids and harsh chemical cleaning products are an unhealthy combination?

The spikes in Asthma and other allergy conditions that we are seeing among student populations and the mounting evidence about the future health consequences of inhaling or absorbing powerful compounds throughout the school day as they circulate through ventilation systems and radiate from every nook and cranny of a well scrubbed school—these are all concerns that can and should be addressed by greening our cleaning. It is now possible to obliterate germs and disinfect surfaces by using a growing number of proven products that are safer for people and friendlier to the environment.

Since I am not eager to inflict impossible state mandates on our schools, I've spoken with our Branford Board of Education Chair, our Schools Superintendent Dr. Kathleen Halligan, and our talented and proactive Facilities Manager Mark Deming who has led the way in Branford for Energy savings that include a Tri-Generation plant in our High School and the implementation of energy efficiencies in our middle and elementary schools. They all encouraged me to co-sponsor HB 6496, explaining that Branford Schools have already begun the process of trading in harsh cleaners for effective and available green cleaners.

Two additional key selling points offered by this bill include the ability for schools to transition from harsh products to green products and the opportunity to buy in bulk through the CT Department of Administrative Services and therefore avoid increased costs for these improved products in such an uncertain economy.

Offering safer cleaning products for our school janitorial staff is also a big plus, since they are on the front lines when it comes to interacting with harsh cleansers.

And Superintendent Halligan also pointed out that Teachers, Administrators, Coaches and support personnel would applaud this effort to clean green as well.

For all of these reasons, and with our Branford School system's enthusiastic encouragement, I am proud to support HB 6496. Thank you.

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