

Written Testimony of Ann Berman, Environmental Concerns Coalition, ECC of Milford before the Connecticut General Environment Committee on March 12, 2010 in Testimony **not to support this Bill 5418** on the grounds that it wants to extend using IPM/Pesticides on the playing fields of K-8th grades.

I am present to see that the banning of the use of pesticides for Day Care Centers (19a-79a) be preserved and that the K-8th grades (10-79a) also remain preserved as passed on each of the above, by both the Senate and the House. And to see that the extension to use IPM/pesticides on the playing fields of the Elementary and Middle Schools, from July 1, 2007 to July 1, 2010 not be extended, that it be discontinued for all time. That henceforth, all land care for these fields are to be organic only.

Just this past month the Canadian Supreme Court passed on giving townships and provinces the legal option to ban the use of pesticides, including, 2,4-D (which is in Scott's Weed and Feed as the active ingredient) on their lawns and public lands. Does this not give us pause? They won the case because of the Precautionary Principle. Basically it asks are you willing to put your children at risk by using toxic substances. The onus needs to be on the applicator to prove that their product will cause no harm. And I say for what good reason should they use a pesticide, for a few weeds and or a dandelion? A couple of generations ago, we all played on such fields with no consequences, and especially no side effects from using a pesticide which has long term consequences for possible cancer, asthma, Parkinson Disease, learning disabilities, and with new leads pointing to autism.

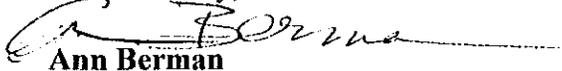
There are more and more landscapers who are going organic. I recently attended classes with the NOFA Organic Land Care Program and several of their instructors were reformed avid pesticide users, why the change of heart? They observed that their lawns were no better and even worse than the neighboring lawns that did not use pesticides and chemical fertilizers. This is no surprise. Let me quote:

"James Carr who is a botanist for the Botanical Gardens who has written a piece about IPM and he says, "It has two fundamental problems. The first is that the more that toxic substances are used, even mildly toxic ones, the more the ecology is disrupted, and the less effective natural controls become, requiring still more intervention by the IPM practitioner. But the more serious problem is that the central word and concept in IPM is pest, and that is where the focus is."

I spoke with the man in Milford who is responsible for the Milford Green, which accommodates over 50,000 people for the Oyster Festival and at least two events each month from spring to fall. All they do for the Green and the playing fields is aerate, mulch with free leaves in the fall and spread some organic fertilizer now and then. That is all that needs to be done for the playing fields for K-8th grade. What is the big deal? These landscapers who are hammering the chairs of this committee are downright lazy and set in their ways. The costs they should be considering is the high health costs and risks they are taking with these young children's lives. I ask that this bill be dropped.

Thank you for your time and kind attention.

Submitted by,



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