



Farmington River Watershed Association, Inc.

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March 15, 2012

TO: Senator Ed Meyer, Representative Richard Roy, and Members of the Environment Committee

FROM: Farmington River Watershed Association

RE: HB 5121,

An Act Concerning the Use of Organic Pesticides on School Property and Authorizing Municipal Regulation of the Use of Pesticides on Residential Property

The Farmington River Watershed Association strongly supports this bill, as enabling municipalities to apply more stringent limits on pesticide use in their towns than is required by state or federal regulation.

Local residents and municipal officials are the people most likely to know of local conditions that require special caution in the application of pesticides. The most compelling example of this is being aware of possible pesticide exposure at schools and other areas where children gather. Local residents also could have informed concerns for other risks, for example to agriculture that relies on insect pollinators, for contamination of wells and natural waterbodies, and for sensitive wildlife areas.

As a watershed organization, we are very much aware that surface water quality is affected by pesticides entering our streams and lakes as runoff. Some of it comes from unnecessary lawn care practices of towns, businesses, and private property owners. Over-use of pesticides is not uncommon, and it can cause exposure to people, animals, or surface water beyond the boundaries of the application area. This is why our public outreach programs emphasize pesticide-free lawn care as feasible, safer for children and pets, and better for community water quality.

If town residents decide that this more conservative approach is better protective of their public health, they should be free to adopt regulations about lawn-care and other pesticides that they judge to be most appropriate for their own communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Fielding
Executive Director,
Farmington River Watershed Association