

## INVASIVE PLANTS COUNCIL

Public Hearing – February 22, 2012  
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Invasive Plants Council Chair: William Hyatt

### **RAISED House Bill No. 5122 – AN ACT REGULATING THE GROWTH AND SALE OF GOLDEN BAMBOO.**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised House Bill No. 5122 - AN ACT REGULATING THE GROWTH AND SALE OF GOLDEN BAMBOO.

The Connecticut Invasive Plant Council, established by CGS Sec. 22a-381, meets regularly to address invasive plant issues and review the status of invasive and potentially invasive plants in Connecticut. Since 2010, we have received a number of complaints and associated documentation concerning “golden bamboo” (a running bamboo, in the genus *Phyllostachys*).

The Invasive Plant Council (IPC) agrees that running bamboo may grow aggressively and spread from their point of origin, sometimes crossing property boundaries and establishing in abutting parcels. However, the actions of the IPC are constrained by Sec. 22a-381b of the CGS. In this section invasive or potentially invasive plants are limited to those which have the “biological potential for existing in high numbers outside habitats that are intensely managed” and have the “potential for rapid growth, high seed production and dissemination and establishment in natural plant communities.”

In August of 2010 the Attorney General’s Office requested a review of running bamboo and consideration for its listing as an invasive species. The IPC took up this issue and subsequently responded that this plant does not meet the criteria for being declared an invasive species because it does not occur except in the immediate proximity to where it is planted (9/25/10 letter from IPC Chair Dr. Mary Musgrave). The IPC continues to review the relevant literature and investigate all reports of running bamboo in Connecticut, but information gathered to-date does not refute our prior conclusions.

The IPC is concerned that the proposed legislation pertains to only one species. Many bamboo species cannot be easily distinguished from one another. To remedy this, the proposed legislation would have to be expanded to cover the planting and sale of all species of running bamboo including but not limited to the genus *Phyllostachys*.

The IPC recognizes the value of informing buyers of the concerns associated with running bamboo. In fact, the Connecticut Nursery & Landscape Association (CNLA) has proactively developed care tags for use in the retail sale of running bamboo that provide information on the potential risk and appropriate containment barriers. These tags are part of a voluntary program that CNLA has been developing with Connecticut retailers. In addition, the CT Agricultural Experiment Station has initiated field studies on the growth of running bamboo, the effectiveness of barriers to rhizome growth, and on how to best control the plant.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal. Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information from the Invasive Plants Council (860-424-3487 or [william.hyatt@ct.gov](mailto:william.hyatt@ct.gov)).