

Written Testimony of  
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Connecticut State Golf Association

**Senate Bill 254**, An Act Restricting the Application of Fertilizers that Contain  
Phosphate

Environment Committee  
March 7, 2012

Good morning Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, Senator Roraback, Representative Chapin and the distinguished members of the Environment Committee my name is Michael Moraghan, I'm the Executive Director of the Connecticut State Golf Association. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about **Senate Bill 254**, An Act Restricting the Application of Fertilizers that Contain Phosphate. While I am here in my official capacity with the Connecticut State Golf Association, I first want to share some personal information.

At various times in my life I've contributed to any number of environmental organizations - from Greenpeace to the Nature Conservancy. One such organization that I am particularly interested in right now is Audubon International - for their program that recognizes golf courses that follow the highest standards of environmental stewardship.

My passion for environmental causes began when I started playing golf as a kid in Litchfield, at a little 9-hole course that has the Bantam River winding through it. It was in this environment, that I fell in love with nature and the natural world.

You see, the first lesson any golfer learns is that you must be a good steward of the earth. When you take a divot you replace it. When you walk through sand you smooth your footprints behind you. When your ball lands on a putting green you repair its mark to maintain a smooth and unblemished surface. And when you're waiting your turn to play, you look for any other small areas that you can restore to a healthy condition.

I believe that every golfer, whether they realize it or not, helps carry the flag of environmental stewardship, and every environmentalist, if they are not already a golfer, should be - because golf embodies the best practices of environmental stewardship.

I believe that among industries in Connecticut, the golf industry is by far the cleanest industry in our state. No other industry provides the vast amount of open, green space and wildlife habitat, and most importantly, and relevant to the bill you are considering, golf courses provide the type of turf grass bio-filter that helps purify ground water. Healthy turf grass, with its dense root system, is essential to both water filtration, and the economic viability of the overall facility.

The Connecticut State Golf Association represents the interests of more than 200,000 citizens who play golf in our state. Thousands of those golfers reside in districts represented by members of this Environment Committee. In fact, there are exactly 40 golf courses within the areas represented by members of this committee.

The golf industry should be promoted and encouraged, not restricted or discouraged. Toward that end, I ask that you exempt golf courses from the proposed legislation, and instead, join with my organization to increase the number of courses in Connecticut that are certified by the Audubon International Sanctuary Program. Connecticut currently ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the country in the percentage of courses registered with Audubon. Our goal is to make Connecticut #1 in the nation in its participation in the Audubon program. That effort will help protect our waterways, and our wildlife for future generations. Thank you for your time.