



Connecticut Farm Bureau Association
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March 7, 2012

Testimony in Opposition to:

Raised Bill No. 254 AN ACT RESTRICTING THE APPLICATION OF FERTILIZERS THAT CONTAIN PHOSPHATE

Raised Bill No. 5305 AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF BAMBOO STAKES TO MARK SHELLFISH GROUNDS

Submitted by: Henry N. Talmage, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Farm Bureau, a statewide nonprofit membership organization of over 5,000 families dedicated to farming and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, Members of the Environment Committee,

Raised Bill No. 254, AN ACT RESTRICTING THE APPLICATION OF FERTILIZERS THAT CONTAIN PHOSPHATE

The Connecticut Farm Bureau is concerned about provisions contained in Raised Bill No. 254. While we support the careful use of fertilizers near wetlands in order to protect our environment we also know that fertilizers containing phosphorus are important to establish root systems on newly planted crops. It appears the intent of this bill is not targeted toward agriculture but the definition of "established lawn" in Section 1 is of particular concern. For example, would a hay field that is cut two or three times a season or a crop of turf grass be defined as an "established lawn" as it is an area of ground that is covered with a species of grass for more than two growing seasons and is customarily kept mowed? The Connecticut Farm Bureau opposes the Bill as written unless the Bill is amended to clarify this definition or provide an agricultural exemption.

Raised Bill No. 5305 AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF BAMBOO STAKES TO MARK SHELLFISH GROUNDS.

The Connecticut Farm Bureau opposes Raised Bill No. 5305 as it removes the authority of the Commissioner of Agriculture to approve the use of bamboo stakes in lieu of the buoy requirements outlined in Section 1. It is our understanding that the use of bamboo stakes in some instances is preferred as it can make monitoring and enforcement efforts easier for regulators and neighboring producers. We feel it is important to allow the Commissioner to approve the use of bamboo stakes where warranted.