

We will not be able to attend the hearing today, due to work commitments. But we would like to submit the following statement for consideration by the hearing committee:

Re: H.B. No. 5480 (COMM) AN ACT REQUIRING AN ASSESSMENT OF THE USE OF CERTAIN PESTICIDES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT RESEARCH FARM.

As long-time Mansfield residents and members of the Storrs Heights Road community which abuts the UConn Agricultural farm, we strongly support this bill so that we can know which pesticides are being used in experimental work on the UConn farm. As a neighborhood community we have tried unsuccessfully to obtain this information from UConn, but our requests have been passed from office to office, and ultimately ignored. This is in violation of the conditions of UConn's Federal funding for some of this work, which requires that all chemicals used in the research must be made public. It is clear that this is a case where some state oversight is necessary in order to provide transparency and answers to the legitimate concerns of local Mansfield residents. It is worth noting that the UConn Ag farm operated for many years without the need for excessive irrigation or the use of experimental pesticides, until about 6 years ago when UConn made an ill-advised unilateral decision to go heavily into the study of turf grass, a decision that has dramatically transformed the operation of the farm and had a serious effect on the local community in terms of water quality and quantity. Again, some oversight and regulation is needed to monitor this unwarranted expansion and its hazardous environmental consequences.

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