



**WEST HARTFORD**  
198 Park Road, 2nd Floor  
West Hartford, CT 06119  
P: (860) 233-7623  
F: (860) 233-7574

EMAIL: [info@toxicsaction.org](mailto:info@toxicsaction.org)  
WEB: [www.toxicsaction.org](http://www.toxicsaction.org)

**Testimony of Toxics Action Center  
by Jonathan Leibovic, Community Organizer**

**In support of bills no. 914, 916, 917, and 6440.**

**Senator Meyer, Representative Gentile, and Members of the Environment Committee:**

Toxics Action Center enthusiastically endorses Senate Bills 914, 916, and 917, and House Bill 6440. For 25 years, Toxics Action Center has worked in partnership with New England communities whose air, water, and lives have been affected by toxic pollution. Pesticides are among the most toxic chemicals that humans create because they are designed to kill other living things: not only weeds and insects, but also mammals like rodents that share up to 97% of their genes with our own species (see supplement 1, Mural et al. 2002). It is no secret that pesticides are dangerous to humans in terms of acute poisoning and by low-level, long-term exposure. The list of diseases caused or aggravated by pesticides is long, and with new research it grows every year: hormonal imbalances leading to behavioral and reproductive problems, autism spectrum disorders, Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, and countless different kinds of cancer (see supplement 2, "Refuse to Use ChemLawn").

Since 1987, Toxics Action Center has partnered with seventy-six New England communities facing pesticide problems, including many here in Connecticut: Darien, East Hartford, Ellington, Middletown, New Canaan, Old Lyme, Stamford, and Woodbridge. Many of these towns have sought the authority to regulate pesticides, but until now that has been illegal. In some of these towns, concerned citizens have formed volunteer groups to spread the word about the dangers of pesticides and promote voluntary use reductions. However, without the authority to enforce these measures, their efforts can never fully protect their most precious natural resources.

Our state has some progressive regulations to protect people from pesticides, but Connecticut is made up of 169 towns and each one is unique. Here perhaps they have a sensitive lake or drinking water source, and here a community of organic farmers or a lobster fishery; here a large population of young schoolchildren or beloved outdoor pets. Certain towns may want to be able to update their local policies quickly to reflect the latest scientific findings about the health effects of pesticides. They should be allowed to do that by voting in their town meeting and submitting an application to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, as HB 6440 allows.

Thank you for your service to the people of Connecticut. For more information, please visit [www.toxicsaction.org/problems-and-solutions/pesticides](http://www.toxicsaction.org/problems-and-solutions/pesticides).