

3/4/13

Dear Children's Committee Public Hearing,

As a lifelong resident of Connecticut and a Nurse with a Master in Public Health, I am in strong support of S.B. No. 981 AN ACT CONCERNING PESTICIDES ON SCHOOL GROUNDS.

Over my past 23 years as a nurse it has been overwhelming to see the growing amount of chronic degenerative disease. Why as a society are we so sick? What I believe we are sorely missing is prevention. The dictionary defines prevention simply as: The action of stopping something from happening or arising.

This bill is a preventative action towards supporting adolescent environmental health.

The American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement "Pesticide Exposure in Children" is asking for governmental support to improve safety and reduction in childhood exposure. (Pediatrics: Pesticide Exposure in Children.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/11/21/peds.2012-2757.full.pdf+html>)

Here are highlights of some of the science and studies I'd like to share:

"Of the 30 most commonly used lawn pesticides, 19 can cause cancer, 13 are linked to birth defects, 21 can affect reproduction and 15 are nervous system toxicants. The most popular and widely used lawn chemical, 2,4-D, which kills broad leaf weeds like dandelions, is an endocrine disruptor with predicted human health hazards ranging from changes in estrogen and testosterone levels, thyroid problems, prostate cancer and reproductive abnormalities. 2,4-D has also been linked to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Other lawn chemicals, like glyphosate (Roundup), have also been linked to serious adverse chronic effects in humans." (Pesticides and You, pg 10,

<http://www.beyondpesticides.org/schools/index.php>)

"So much new science exists around the links between obesity and environmental contaminants that a new term, "obesogen" (like carcinogen) has emerged in the literature. Findings increasingly suggest that exposures to pesticides and other chemicals play a role by altering developmental programming in ways that raise

the likelihood of obesity and related metabolic effects such as diabetes.” (Baillie-Hamilton, P.F. “Chemical toxins: a hypothesis to explain the global obesity epidemic.” J Altern Complement Med. 2002 8: 185-192.

<http://www.panna.org/sites/default/files/KidsHealthReportOct2012.pdf>)

Pesticides can increase susceptibility to certain cancers by breaking down the immune system’s surveillance against cancer cells. Infants and children, the aged and the chronically ill are at greatest risk from chemically-induced immune suppression. (Repetto, R., et al. 1996 March. Pesticides and Immune System: The Public Health Risk, World Resources Institute, Washington, DC.)

75 out of all 99 human studies done on lymphoma and pesticides find a link between the two. (Osburn, S. 2001. “Do Pesticides Cause Lymphoma?” Lymphoma Foundation of America, Chevy Chase, MD.)

Four peer-reviewed studies demonstrate the ability of glyphosate-containing herbicides to cause genetic damage to DNA (mutagenicity), even at very low concentration levels. (Cox C. 2004 Winter. “Glyphosate.” Journal Of Pesticide Reform Vol.24 (4).)

The probability of an effect such as cancer, which requires a period of time to develop after exposure, is enhanced if exposure occurs early in life. (Vasselinovitch, S., et al. 1979. “Neoplastic Response of Mouse Tissues During Perinatal Age Periods and Its Significance in Chemical Carcinogenesis,” Perinatal Carcinogenesis, National Cancer Institute Monograph 51)

We, children included, are exposed to an astounding number of chemicals every day, and we rarely think of the cumulative effects they might have on our health.

13 to 18 year olds by nature are at increased risk due to their size, developing bodies and behaviors. These children are at risk of coming in contact with pesticides be playing an outdoor sport or say sitting under a tree or against the school fence with friends talking, doing homework or texting. They may wrestle on the grass. They may stand outside daydreaming looking out at the school grounds that have just been sprayed. Then on the soles of their sneakers or athletic shoes, a study by the EPA found residue from outdoor pesticides tracked inside, increasing the pesticide load in carpet dust by as much as 400%.

This is because pesticides are broken down by sunlight, water and microbes not typically found indoors.

The typical routes of exposure to pesticides include inhalation, skin absorption and accidental ingestion.

We need to think about changing our habits and beliefs to improve our children's health.

In a nut shell that is what this bill is about.

It concerns me and I believe most citizens are not aware of this fact:

“The vast majority of pesticide products registered for use by EPA and state governments have never been fully tested for the full range of potential human health effects. Pesticides can be registered even when they have been shown to cause adverse health problems. The regulatory system justifies allowable risks.” (Pesticides and You, Pg 11 <http://www.beyondpesticides.org/schools/index.php>)

And I fully agree:

“There is no way to predict the effects in children solely based on toxicity testing in adult or even adolescent laboratory animals, which is EPA’s procedure for evaluating adverse effects.” (Pesticides and You, Pg 11 <http://www.beyondpesticides.org/schools/index.php>)

A child's’ body is very dynamic and rapidly growing.

We in Connecticut can do better for our children, our next generation.

I personally have transitioned my lawns using natural care practices. I had been taught how to care for my lawn by advertisers. This transition required effort on my part in educating myself.

In 2010 our neighbor, New York State, became the first state in the nation to ban the use of chemical turf pesticides on school grounds and playing fields for all their students K-12. They have over 100 schools with strong, healthy green playing field and grounds.

Change brings up fear of failure, and the unknown. Working together we can make this change to ensure our high school students do not bear the burden of our failure to act on the science and health effects of pesticides.

Protecting the environment adolescents engage in is our responsibility.

I ask you to please pass this legislation.

Cindy Snow
Resident Burlington, CT

For more science:

Questions and Answers About Turf Pesticides -

<http://www.grassrootsinfo.org/csindex.html>

A Chemical Reaction - movie - <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1469852/synopsis>

Children and Pesticides Don't Mix -

<http://beyondpesticides.org/lawn/factsheets/Pesticide.children.dontmix.pdf>

Kids Health Report October 2012 -

<http://www.panna.org/sites/default/files/KidsHealthReportOct2012.pdf>

Pesticide Exposure in Children: Council on Environmental Health -

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/11/21/peds.2012-2757.full.pdf+html>