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Martin Mador, Legislative Chair*

Children's Committee  
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Testimony In Favor of  
SB 981 AAC Pesticides On School Grounds

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I am the volunteer Legislative Chair for the Connecticut Chapter of the Sierra Club. I hold a Masters of Environmental Management degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

This bill extends the 8 year old pesticide ban on school grounds from K-8 schools to K-12 schools. Let's ask just a few questions to help us keep our priorities about turf pesticides in proper order:

**What are pesticides?** They are chemicals intentionally created for the express purpose of killing living things. Small insects will die immediately. Humans may not show negative reactions for decades after exposure.

**What illnesses have been linked to chemicals found in pesticides?** Asthma, cancer, damage to the liver, kidney, endocrine system, nervous system

**Why worry about children?** Science tells us that young, growing bodies are the most sensitive to toxics. High school students are still growing, and still deserving of our protection.

**Are turf pesticides really necessary?** No. We have documented case studies showing how modern organic methods work just as well when a transition period is considered. Organic turf is fully useable, even on high school athletic fields.

**Are pesticides cheaper?** No. Those case studies also show that modern organic methods are no more expensive than toxic pesticides to achieve similar results.

**Does EPA registration mean safe?** No, the agency does no testing, and registration does not imply safety.

**What about an emergency infestation?** The bill provides for appropriate pesticide use if necessary.

**Would Connecticut be the first state with a K-12 ban?** No. New York state has one in place already.

**So why do we still use toxic pesticides?** Because we are the Land Of Steady Habits. Long established practices persist, despite bountiful evidence they no long serve us well.

**How do we move to better methods?** Training courses for turf managers are readily available, some at no charge.

**You have made 3 minutes of summary claims here. Can you back them up with evidence?** Yes, definitely.

Connecticut has followed a progression in recent years working to protect its citizens from unnecessary exposure to toxic substances. We have a ways to go. This bill is simply the next step in the campaign to keep us safe from toxic pesticides.