



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF ATHLETIC DIRECTORS, INC.

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Testimony Regarding:

SB 68 - AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE USE OF CERTAIN MICROBIAL AND BIOCHEMICAL PESTICIDES AND GRUB CONTROL PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

My name is Fred Balsamo, Executive Director for the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD), which represents the athletic directors in 189 high schools and 170 middle school athletic programs across the state.

First, we can all agree that the environment is a major concern to all of us. However, we feel it is important that any legislation that is passed should have a balanced perspective and it should encompass any and all problems that can harm the school's athletic fields. Senate Bill 68 would permit a very specific product to be used to address grub control on public and private school grounds K to 8. The problem of grub control on school grounds is just one of many issues facing our schools. Since the July 1, 2010 ban, schools are having problems with tick populations, poison ivy taking over fence lines, planting beds and boulder areas as well as poor compacted athletic fields just to name a few of the problems. All of these issues present a hazard to students.

CAAD is sympathetic to the problems schools are having across the state since the ban on the use of EPA registered pesticides on public and private school grounds K to 8. Since the ban, athletic fields and school grounds have fallen into complete disrepair, despite the efforts of the licensed professionals maintain the properties, but as a result of the professionals lacking the necessary and effective tools to provide for a safe and healthy property for students. The ban does not allow any EPA registered pest controls to be used. Over the past three years pest populations have grown without controls rendering many athletic fields and school grounds unplayable.

CAAD believes that it is bad public policy to draft legislation that carves out an exception for one EPA registered product. Numerous municipal organizations, responsible for ensuring that our students have healthy and safe schools grounds support a comprehensive approach to controlling pest population rather than dealing with it on a piecemeal basis like this proposal. The U.S. EPA recommends that schools utilize an Integrated Pest Management approach to care for school grounds; this is the approach Connecticut should adopt.

Sincerely,

Fred Balsamo

Fred Balsamo, CMAA, Executive Director
Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors