

February 16, 2014

Dear Environmental Committee Members,

My name is Michelle Bonfiglio and I reside in Wethersfield, CT. Before I begin my testimony I would like to state that I applaud the intent of Senate Bill 72 but would like to see the following included in the bill: **declare running bamboo a nuisance with a 40 foot setback on EXISTING bamboo.**

My husband and I purchased our home in 1997. In mid-2007 our neighbor planted bamboo along his property line. As time went by, it became apparent that the barrier that was constructed was compromised and bamboo spikes began to grow in our yard. The spikes predominantly appear in the spring time and they continue to grow in the summer/fall. The spikes are growing around our shed and throughout a significant portion of our yard. During the growing season, a large portion of our yard requires daily maintenance to remove the culms that grow relentlessly. Also, we lose the ability to use that portion of our yard due to the continued growth. We pay property taxes on the entire property and it is unfair that we lose the use of that area. Lastly, after rain or wet snow, the mature bamboo droops and falls into our yard, further diminishing the use of our property. Also, in August 2013, a shoot was measured 15 feet from my home!

Needless to say, we are highly concerned about property damage to our home as well as our property value.

My husband and I have tried to speak to the neighbor for 3 to 4 years about the bamboo growing in our yard to no avail. In May 2013, my husband was told by the neighbors that **"all plants grow"**, the plants are **"grandfathered in"**, and there isn't **"a damn thing anyone can do about it."** In October 2013, we were met with hostility, profanity and name calling by our neighbors after we sent them a letter outlining our concerns about the continued bamboo encroachment onto our property.

A few months ago, an abatement company came out to the house and informed us the only way to stop the bamboo growth is to completely remove the bamboo plants and dig up both yards to remove any rhizomes that have grown underground. Until then, there is nothing we can do to stop the bamboo growth and there is nothing I can do to protect my property and property value.

Lastly, the bamboo plants are less than 20 feet from the wetlands and we understand that is a significant concern with the Wetlands Commission. Our backyard borders wetlands which are located in the Tanglewood Open Space and has a sewer line easement that runs from the street to the wetlands. The sewer line easement runs between our property and the neighbor's property; with the bamboo plants planted in the easement. It is only a matter of time before the bamboo spreads to the wetlands and overtakes the area.

The law that was implemented on October 1, 2013 and Senate Bill 72 are great steps, however it does not fully protect private property from the damaging spread of bamboo. Please **declare bamboo a nuisance with a 40 foot setback on existing bamboo** in order to stop the spread and damages.

Thank you for your time, attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michelle Bonfiglio

June 2013: Bamboo and shed



June 2013: Bamboo spikes in yard



August 7, 2013: 3 Bamboo spikes with shed



May 2013: Bamboo spike near shed in front



May 2013: Bamboo spikes near shed in back



May 2013: Bamboo spikes near shed in back



May 2013: Bamboo spike 8 ¼ feet from bamboo planting near shed



August 7, 2013: Bamboo spike less than 15 feet from 46 Ivy Lane House



August 7, 2013: Bamboo spike less than 20 feet from paver patio



August 7, 2013: 2 Bamboo spikes from paver patio



June 2013: Bamboo on shed after rainfall



Winter 2013: Bamboo on shed after snowfall



February 5, 2014: Bamboo on shed and in yard



February 5, 2014: Bamboo on shed and in yard after snowfall



February 7, 2014: Bamboo on shed and in yard

