

Lauralyn Lewis
2 Elm St., Old Lyme, CT 06371

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Re: **S.B. No. 443** - An Act Concerning Pesticides on School Grounds, Parks, Playgrounds, Athletic Fields and Municipal Greens

Today I ask the legislators on the Environment Committee to support SB-443; to expand the current ban prohibiting the use of the lawn care pesticides on the grounds of preschools through grade eight to now include high schools, parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and municipal greens. Additionally, I would ask that you support the proposed amendment by Senator Williams to ban genetically engineered grass and landscaping plants. Lawn care pesticides are some of the most toxic chemicals we are exposed to and children are among the most vulnerable when it comes to toxic chemical exposure. These chemicals are designed to kill and they are linked to cancer and birth defects.

A number of you were involved in the bold act of passing historic legislation for GMO labeling here in Connecticut. Connecticut also passed legislation to ban pesticides from elementary and middle school playing fields. Now it is time to apply that same common sense once again and protect Connecticut's children in some of the other places where they play. The arguments for and against the use of pesticides remain consistent. For every study that shows these chemicals are dangerous to human health (<http://www.beyondpesticides.org/lawn/factsheets/Pesticide.children.dontmix.pdf>) the chemical industry can present studies that show they are safe. I ask you to support this bill by following the precautionary principle that many countries adhere to, countries that are not willing to take unnecessary chances with the health of their children. All children depend on us to keep them safe. We are all exposed to a variety of toxins daily due to the lack of oversight and the politics that allow for that. Connecticut legislators, it is time to take the necessary bold action to protect Connecticut's children where they play. It is important to now go beyond what is at the end of our forks and protect the grounds where our children spend a significant part of their young lives.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauralyn Lewis