



## *The Jonah Center for Earth and Art*

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### TESTIMONY

In Support of SB 46

An Act Concerning Pesticides on School Grounds

By John C. Hall

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The Jonah Center for Earth and Art is a nonprofit environmental education and advocacy organization in the greater Middletown area. For the last 10 years, we have worked collaboratively with other institutions and organizations, such as the City of Middletown, Wesleyan University, Middlesex Community College, and a variety of other environmental nonprofits. Health and safety for humans as well as for the creatures that inhabit our woodlands, meadows, and waterways is central to our mission.

SB 46, An Act Concerning Pesticides on Schools Grounds, is an important and necessary step forward to protect the health of all school children in Connecticut. Although state law currently prohibits lawn care pesticides on K-8 school grounds, protections are needed for high school students. The "lawn chemical culture" in our society is strong and resistant to facing the known dangers posed by these chemicals, not to mention the dangers that have been undocumented. Legislation does not immediately change that culture, but without legislation, we are essentially stuck with the commercial forces that continue to promote the sale and application of dangerous chemicals where children play.

The dangers of lawn chemicals have long been minimized and denied by the lawn chemical industry. There is mounting evidence that such chemicals are endocrine interrupters whose effects may not immediately be identified as pathological but contribute to public health concerns such as obesity. Exposure to these chemicals takes place not only while children are on playgrounds and athletic fields, but afterwards too because the chemicals are carried away by shoes and clothing.

The Jonah Center for Earth and Art represents approximately 400 constituents in the greater Middletown area. While we obviously cannot speak for each of these individuals, our programs on the dangers of lawn chemicals and on organic (non-chemical) lawn care have been well-attended for many years.

Thank you for considering this testimony in support of S.B. 46

*Our mission: to foster sustainable relationships among people, other creatures, energy resources, and the environment and to promote interdisciplinary community partnerships in scientific, artistic, and other cultural endeavors.*