

Children Committee
Public Testimony
March 6, 2014

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF SB 46 AN ACT CONCERNING PESTICIDES ON
SCHOOL GROUNDS

Dear Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, Senator Linares, Representative Betts and esteemed members of the Children Committee,

From our experience it is in the best interest of the communities you represent to testify against increasing the pesticide ban at schools to include high schools. The Parks and Recreation Professionals in charge of school grounds and athletic fields are prudent in their use of traditional herbicides and pesticides. It has always been felt that it is Joe Homeowner, who goes to the local garden center, purchases products, doesn't read labels and blast their lawns with excessive products unnecessarily, who should be regulated.

Admittedly several years ago our industry may not have been as conservative as we are now. Awareness, education, training and use of professional landscapers and licensed staff have changed that. An Integrated Pest Management system is the best route to go. Here in East Hampton we are in full compliance with the laws at each of the schools we maintain. We are not interested in broadcasting copious amounts of toxins onto fields. We are concerned with maintaining a balance between healthy turf, and a healthy environment for our children.

At the Middle School field here in East Hampton, it is only a matter of time before we lose the entire turf field either to bent grass, crab grass or grubs due to our inability to use traditional pesticides and herbicides. The only practice currently acceptable is to over seed the field twice a year and put down lime to maintain the PH. Grass seed is \$80 per bag. It costs us \$800-\$1200 each time we do this.

I appreciate your support on this topic.

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