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FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



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**Empowering Communities, Advocating Solutions.**

**Testimony in Opposition to HB 5580**  
**Louis W. Burch, Government Relations**  
**Citizens Campaign for the Environment**

**March 21, 2014**  
**Hartford, CT**

Senator Osten, Representative Rojas, distinguished members of the Planning & Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Louis Burch, government relations liaison for Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE). Supported by over 80,000 members in Connecticut and New York State, CCE works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment. CCE would like to offer the following testimony regarding House Bill 5580:

**HB 5580- AAC the Pesticide Advisory Council, Recommendations of the Emergency Medical Services Primary Service Area Task Force, and the Elimination of a Municipal Mandate (OPPOSED)**

It is well documented that exposure to pesticides can increase an individual's risk of developing neurological, respiratory and endocrine disorders. Long-term exposure to pesticides has also been linked to a number of cancers, including non-Hodgkin lymphoma. CCE works to protect human health and the environment by promoting policies aimed at reducing pesticide use wherever possible. **CCE therefore opposes the provisions in sections 1-3 of this legislation, on the grounds that both the language and intent of this bill are unclear and may lead to unintended consequences, including greater use and human exposure to pesticides on and around municipal buildings.**

The Pesticide Advisory Committee referred to in section 1 has been inactive in Connecticut for several years. CCE is therefore opposed to giving this body new responsibilities at this time. These functions should instead be handled by the CT Department of Public Health, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, or other appropriate state agency. DPH or DEEP would be better suited to conduct this analysis, given the tremendous volume of pesticide products currently on the market, the time and resources needed to effectively review each product for safety, and the ability to carry out many of these functions through mechanisms already in place in each of the respective agencies.

Section 2 of this bill requires the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection to establish a regional purchasing program through which municipalities may purchase pesticides for a reduced price. CCE supports the idea of cooperative bids and bulk purchasing of materials and equipment to save municipalities money, however this section does not specify what time of pesticides are included in this agreement. **CCE opposes this section as written, on the grounds that it may be interpreted to allow procurement of lawn care pesticides, which is inconsistent with existing state policy regarding pesticides on school playing fields.**

Section 3 requires the Commissioner and the Pesticide Advisory Council to create an integrated pesticide management website to showcase best management practices for controlling pests. The DEEP website currently has information on IPM available for homeowners and municipalities. CCE opposes this provision as it is unnecessarily duplicative of services that are already available to the public through DEEP.

While CCE supports bulk procurement of materials and equipment for municipalities, it is clear that potential unintended consequences of increasing municipal access to pesticides are inconsistent with the values of good science, which calls for reducing or eliminating toxic pesticides in our environment wherever possible.

On behalf of our members in Connecticut, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and look forward to working with you on this important issue.