



11 High Gate Lane, West Hartford, CT 06107-1010
Phone/Fax 860.519.0023
www.ct-asbo.org

Planning and Development Committee – March 21, 2014

Written Testimony on HB 5580 -An Act Concerning the Pesticide Advisory Council, the Recommendations of the Emergency Medical Service Area Task Force and the Elimination of Municipal Mandate

Good Afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Rojas, Senator Fasano, Representative Aman and members of the Planning and Development Committee. My name is David G. Lenihan and I am the legislative liaison for the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials (CASBO). I am also a retired School Business Manager with over 14 years of experience in this field and a past president of CASBO.

CASBO is a non-profit professional association that represents school business officials (SBOs) throughout the state of Connecticut. SBO's are responsible for most aspects of school business and operations. This includes, but not limited to, developing and monitoring school district budgets, as well as overseeing school maintenance and operations, including field preparation and care.

To this end, CASBO has always made the safety of children its highest priority. We realize that we do not live in a risk free world and that it is impossible to shield children from all risks. Our goals are to identify all risks associated with school safety and develop comprehensive programs that will manage and mitigate such risks in a safe, reliable and cost effective manner. CASBO believes that HB 5580 provides a balanced approach to accomplish this important objective and we urge the Committee to pass it.

Since July 1, 2010, there has been a ban on the use of EPA registered pesticides on public school grounds K to 8. Since the ban has been in place, many school fields have been damaged severely and some rendered unplayable, despite the efforts of grounds staff to maintain these fields using more expensive organic materials and/or labor-intensive manual procedures. Simply stated, these materials and procedures are not effective in addressing pest problems on school grounds.

As a result, not only have pest populations grown without controls but other unintended consequences have occurred. These include, but not limited to, invasive plants (i.e. poison ivy), ticks, tree disease, and playing surfaces that are very hard and uneven. All these issues present serious health and safety hazards to our students.

We understand that there are several bills before the legislature to expand this ban and there is a great deal of debate surrounding the pros and cons for the judicious use of pesticides on school grounds and other areas. CASBO strongly supports using the Pesticide Advisory Council to review and vet all the facts concerning the safety and effective use of both synthetic and organic pesticides and to work with the Commissioner of DEEP to create a set of best practices and adopt appropriate regulations. We understand that the M.O.R.E Mandates working group recently recommended this common sense approach as well.

CASBO, as well as many other municipal organizations, believes that a comprehensive, balanced approach that safely controls pests and addresses all other safety issues is a far better way to ensure the safety of all our children.

HB 5580 accomplishes this balanced approach.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this important matter.