

Written Testimony
Michael Wallace, Vice President
Support of House Bill 5580

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PESTICIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL, THE
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PRIMARY SERVICE
AREA TASK FORCE AND THE ELIMINATION OF A MUNICIPAL MANDATE.

Friday, March 21, 2014
Planning & Development Committee

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Rojas, Senator Fasano, Representative Aman and the distinguished members of the Planning & Development Committee, my name is Mike Wallace, I am the vice president of the Connecticut Environmental Council (CTEC). I appreciate this opportunity to offer my comments in support of House Bill 5580 in regards to sections 1 to 3.

CTEC is a membership organization representing Connecticut associations and professionals. Our members include the Grounds Keepers Association, the Tree Protection Association, the Pest Control Association, the Irrigation Contractors Association, and the Association Golf Course Superintendents. All are licensed, educated professionals.

There are three reasons to support House Bill 5580:

First and most importantly, this legislation puts the oversight and evaluation of pesticides for safety and effectiveness, where it should be – with Pesticide Advisory Council, and the regulatory process with the DEEP commissioner. The Pesticide Advisory Council has the expertise to utilize the best scientific minds and experienced researchers to make recommendations on best management practices for pesticide use. Serving on the Advisory Council are the director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, Commissioners of Agriculture, Public Health and the dean of UConn's College of Agriculture. This distinguished group of experts would be responsible for making recommendations for the best management practices for the use of synthetic and organic pesticides by municipalities.

Second, House Bill 5580 seeks to create an online registry similar to the one already being utilized in Massachusetts. Such an online registry of pesticide use would transfer piles of unread pesticide reports at DEEP into a system that professional applicators, town managers/parks employees and citizen could review. This system would lead to a better sharing of best management practices for school grounds, athletic fields and municipal properties.

Finally, this bill encourages municipalities to work together on a regional basis to make group purchases of products to protect municipal properties from pest populations.

Over twenty organizations responsible for maintain municipal properties support this balanced science based approach to ensure that our communities have safe and pest free parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and municipal greens. The passing of House Bill 5580 would meet our recommendation.

We respectfully request your support for this legislation.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide you with this testimony. I would be glad to answer any questions.