



**Testimony  
Connecticut Council of Small Towns  
Before the  
Public Health Committee  
March 14, 2014**

**HB-5330 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES AT PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, ATHLETIC FIELDS AND MUNICIPAL GREENS**

Since the ban on the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plans on K-8 school grounds became effective on July 1, 2010, the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) has heard from many towns throughout the state regarding the problems they face with the maintenance of their athletic fields and school grounds. By extending the ban to include parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and municipal greens, we are concerned that these municipal areas will fall into disrepair and potentially create hazardous situations for residents and visitors.

Understandably, communities want to continue to do their part to ensure that state laws and policies involving the use of pesticides are successful in protecting the health and safety of our children. Towns have been actively searching for ways in which to proceed, but continue to be faced with differing viewpoints and somewhat conflicting studies relative to pesticides.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recent update to the strategic plan on Integrated Pest Management, IPM is cost-effective, reduces exposure to pests and pesticides and reduces overall pesticide use. Given this report, it is surprising that Connecticut would consider expanding the ban on IPM.

Recently the MORE Commission Mandate Subcommittee recommended the creation of a Pesticide Advisory Council, a balanced council that will develop policies around the use of pesticides. This is a key step in the development of policies around the use of pesticides and in the protection of the health and safety of our children.

COST supports the MORE Commission Mandate Subcommittee recommendations to:

1. Utilize the legislatively created Pesticide Advisory Council to review all new pesticides on a continuing basis for safety and effectiveness and report their findings to the Commissioner of DEEP for consideration; and
2. Require DEEP, in consultation with the Pesticide Advisory Council, to develop and disseminate best practices to assist in guiding towns regarding these issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.