

February 14, 2014

To: The Environment Committee

Re: TESTIMONY FOR S.B. 72 AN ACT CONCERNING LIABILITY FOR THE GROWING OF RUNNING BAMBOO

The purpose of my testimony is to declare running bamboo a nuisance with a 40 foot setback on existing bamboo. Not even a buffer zone of any distance will stop the infestation of this non-indigenous plant.

My testimony is to explain our personal situation that started just over one year ago with the purchase of our home in Westport, CT. We had no idea it had running bamboo on the property line. The bamboo was planted by the adjacent property owner. At the time of the purchase we had no idea what running bamboo was. Not the previous owners, real estate agents, inspectors nor attorney's disclosed that my neighbors running bamboo was invading the property.

About six months into owning the property, the rhizomes started spouting up in the white pebble driveway. We were planning on paving it so we began to investigate what the sprouts were and how they spread. Once we discovered what "Phyllostachys Bissetii (running bamboo)" was and about the underground network of rhizomes we approached the neighbor to ask if he would remove it. He said no and told us that he put in a barrier on his side of the property. There is not a barrier on our side of the property. He has been promising to put in a barrier but nothing to date. My fear is the rhizomes will eventually penetrate the natural gas, water and septic lines that will cross its path.

During each snow storm, we have the 40ft culms, heavy with snow, draped across my power lines (from street to house), ready to snap them. When we asked our neighbor to please do something about the bamboo he told me to just shake off the snow. With heavy snowfall we are out every couple hours shaking off bamboo. This is extremely dangerous. We have reached out to CL&P and they said it's not their responsibility and to reach out to my town DOT. We reached out to the DOT and they said "Public works has no jurisdiction on private property.

We have spent hours and weekends cutting down and removing what we can our side of the property. We know now that fighting off the rhizomes will continue to encroach on our property until all the bamboo rhizomes are removed permanently from my neighbor's property. We can see the bamboo driving up through the brand new sidewalk that was just put in last summer.

In another location on our property, we have removed over 100 culms. We have also removed a 20ft rhizome that was snaking through my yard towards our 100 year old beech tree. My fence is being pushed down from the growth of my neighbors bamboo. We have hired a professional to remove rhizomes on our property. We have spent over \$2000 in the first year and it will be never ending. We will spend every weekend for the rest of our lives with clippers, shovels, picks and rakes removing rhizomes. We have 10 lawn and leaf trash bags filled with rhizomes that I am trying to find a place to have them incinerated.

We need to: **“Declare running bamboo a nuisance with a 40 foot setback on existing bamboo (no bamboo buffer zone – where bamboo cannot exist including rhizomes)”**. Not even a buffer zone of any distance will stop the infestation of this non-indigenous plant.

This plants path of destruction and devastation is still in its infancy. We need to do something now before it gets any worse. The consequences if we do not act on this now will be costly to everyone.

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