



March 16, 2014

Senator Ed Meyer, Co-Chair  
Representative Linda Gentile, Co-Chair  
Environment Committee  
Room 3200, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Email address: Env.Testimony@cga.ct.gov

RE; Senate Bill 443

We support the passage of Senate Bill 443, which is now before the joint Environment Committee.

*For the health of the water as well as the health of our children and pets, the resiliency of our land, and the promotion of our fish and shellfish industries and our tourism and marine recreation-based economy we urge you to support Senate Bill 443.*

CUSH, Inc. (Clean Up Sound and Harbors) is a local environmental organization in southeastern Connecticut with a mission to clean up and promote healthy waters in the coastal communities of Fishers Island Sound. CUSH addresses its mission through projects and programs in four areas: water quality monitoring, coastal cleanups, Sound-Friendly Boating, and Sound-Friendly Gardening.

Our water quality data support the universally accepted recognition that what we put on our lawns and parks and playing fields and how we manage run-off have major impacts on water quality. The quick-release nitrogen in synthetic fertilizer feeds the algae that clog our rivers, inlets and coves, rendering them increasingly unable to support a robust marine environment. We are left with suffocating, sunlight-blocking and oxygen-depleting mats of algae. It is lethal to many aquatic species and leaves the areas un-swimmable and displeasing for human recreation.

Many of the synthetic chemical lawn fertilizers on the market also contain synthetic pesticides. We are aware of independent studies that connect use of pesticides to the collapse of bee colonies, to harming other beneficial insects and birds, and to disease in marine shellfish and crustaceans. Studies also associate use of synthetic

pesticides with human and animal pathologies such as neurological diseases, cancer, and immune system disorders.

We also know that by using a natural systems approach to lawn and turf management, the need for synthetic chemical lawn pesticides is virtually nonexistent. And we also know that this form of management will yield attractive, more sustainable lawns, turf and parks at comparable or lower cost.

We believe it is prudent and protective to ban the use of these pesticides on school and parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and municipal greens. (except in emergency situations that pose a serious human health threat as presented in the proposed bill).

We believe that this issue is important. We conduct training and education programs for our area residents, businesses and landscapers as well as our public officials so that they understand the whys and hows of using organic/natural systems approaches to garden, lawn and turf management. We hope and expect that you, as our elected representatives, will act in the interests of the greater good for our health and economic well-being – and will support this bill.

Sincerely,

Frances E. Hoffman

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Cc Senator Andrew Maynard  
Representative Diana Urban  
Representative Elissa Wright