

Please support SB-443 to ban lawn pesticides on high school grounds. In our town of Durham, CT our District 13 high school was sprayed right before the kids returned to school. Kids and teachers were unknowingly walking across the lawn in preparation of the upcoming school days! When I spoke up, several teachers were very upset the groundskeeper chose to have this application done. When I went into the school to speak to him about the yellow signs he said "We have tried everything to get rid of the weeds-nothing else works." I tried to explain to him the lawn was extremely compacted and had little grass growing in it anyway. The Tru Green chemical application was not working either, it was exposing our community to harmful, unnecessary chemicals. It also gets mowed extremely short so good cultural practices are not being followed. It was made up of clover, dandelions and crabgrass. There was no way an application made by the Tru Green company was going to help this lawn. It needed to be aerated, a thin layer of compost added and reseeded. Even then, this is where the kids WALK so it will only be compacted again. The mix of clover, dandelions and crabgrass WAS GREEN and from the sidewalk looked fine. There is NO NEED to expose our teens to these harmful chemicals in order to have the so-called perfect lawn. As a mom of 3, I am extremely proud of the State of CT for protecting our K-8 children. We need to carry this through to the high school age children too!

Last summer I went to Community Lake Park in Wallingford to bike ride on the Quinnipiac Linear Trail with my family and we left when we saw the lawn had recently been sprayed the day before. The little yellow pesticide signs were posted and there were families enjoying the park and having parties in the pavilion, children running across the lawn and playing games. It made me very sad knowing all those people were being exposed to the chemicals. The general public has no idea the danger they are being exposed to. We need to protect our citizens from these dangers.

I also know that the CT Nursery and Landscape Association is going to fight passage this bill. As a certified Connecticut Nursery and Landscape Professional myself, I wanted to let you know I DO NOT AGREE with their position on this matter. As a landscaper I know I do not need to use these toxic products on clients properties. There is a much safer way to garden-not only for the homeowner and their children, but for the entire ecosystem that is their yard.

As for the issue of the genetically engineered grass seed that may be added to this bill, I am against allowing that to be sold in CT also. Healthy grass is a mixture of many types of seed, plus clover for the nitrogen fixing properties it has. If we allow genetically engineered grass seed to be sold, it will allow many homeowners who do not understand the toxicity of Round Up to use more of it. Genetically engineered seed pollen may also drift into neighboring properties. I live near an organic dairy farm. Would the milk from those cows still be considered organic if the cows inadvertently ate the genetically engineered grass that would grow? According to the law now the answer would be "No." This is not fair to that dairy farm who does everything correctly to be an organic farm. Please be the leader in the country on this issue and do not allow this type of seed to be sold here in CT. And keep our children safe from toxic lawn products!

Thank you for listening,  
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and  
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