



11 High Gate Lane, West Hartford, CT 06107-1010  
Phone/Fax 860.519.0023  
www.ct-asbo.org

## Written Testimony for Environment Committee Public Hearing March 11, 2015

### **SB 366- An Act Extending the Ban on the Use of Lawn Care Pesticides to Schools that House Grades Nine to Twelve, Inclusive and to State Facilities and SB 1063- An Act Concerning The Application of Pesticides on School Grounds and Certain Public Spaces, Authorizing the Use of Certain Microbials and Reestablishing the Pesticide Advisory Council.**

The Connecticut Association of School Business Officials (CASBO) is a non-profit professional association that represents school business officials (SBOs) throughout the state of Connecticut. SBOs work closely with school boards, administrators, staff, public officials and communities; and are responsible for most aspects of school business and operations. This includes, but not limited to, developing and monitoring school district budgets, as well as overseeing school maintenance and operations, including field preparation and care.

To this end, CASBO has always made the safety of children its highest priority. We realize that we do not live in a risk free world and that it is impossible to shield children from all risks. Our goals are to identify all risks associated with school safety and develop comprehensive programs that will manage and mitigate such risks in a safe, reliable and cost effective manner. It is within this context that we make the following comments.

Since July 1, 2010, there has been a ban on the use of EPA registered pesticides on public school grounds K to 8. Since the ban has been in place, many school fields have been damaged severely and some rendered unplayable, despite the efforts of grounds staff to maintain these fields using more expensive organic materials and/or labor-intensive manual procedures. Simply stated, these materials and procedures are not effective in addressing pest problems on school grounds.

As a result, not only have pest populations grown without controls but other unintended consequences have occurred. These include, but not limited to, invasive plants (i.e. poison ivy), ticks, tree disease, and playing surfaces that are very hard and uneven. All these issues present serious health and safety hazards to our students.

We are concerned that SB 366 extends this ineffective ban and its unintended risks, to grades 9-12 and to state agencies. Any efforts to expand the ban on pesticide use to athletic fields and other areas will lead to many of these areas becoming unsafe and, in the case of high school athletic fields, unplayable. Consequently, we respectfully request that you not move forward with this proposed bill.

We also have concerns about SB 1063. Although this bill specifically addresses grub control, this is only one of many issues facing schools as indicated above. A piecemeal approach to dealing with just one of these issues is not effective.

CASBO, as well as many other educational and municipal organizations, instead believe that a comprehensive, balanced approach that safely controls pests and addresses all other safety issues is a far better way to ensure the safety of all our children.

CASBO fully supports the U.S. EPA recommended Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to care for all school grounds. IPM is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach that worked very successfully on school grounds prior to the ban and we believe will be safe and effective in the future.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this important matter.