



Testimony of Anne Hulick, RN, MS, JD;
Director, CT Clean Water Action and Coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut.

Before the CT General Assembly's Children's Committee, March 3, 2015

Testimony in support of HB 6897 An Act Concerning the Application of Pesticides at State-Operated Parks, Athletic Fields and Playgrounds

Good morning Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and distinguished members of the Children's Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I speak in support of HB 6897, An Act Concerning the Application of Pesticides at State-Operated Parks, Athletic Fields and Playgrounds.

My name is Anne Hulick, and I am the Director of CT Clean Water Action and the Coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut (Coalition). I am also a nurse with many years of experience in environmental health. The Coalition is a large advocacy organization comprised of over fifty-five member organizations of health professionals, environmental justice advocates, labor groups, public health professionals, environmental experts, faith based groups, scientists and many individuals across Connecticut that are concerned about the growing body of research linking exposure to toxic chemicals with the rise in serious diseases. Toxic chemical exposure during critical windows of fetal development and to young infants and children is of particular concern.

The Coalition strongly supports HB 6897.

There is very strong evidence that exposure to pesticides is linked to many very serious diseases including non-hodgkins lymphoma, birth and/or reproductive abnormalities and impaired brain development. The National Cancer Institute reported that the rising use of pesticides could be contributing to the rise in non-hodgkins lymphoma.¹ Children are more susceptible to the toxic effects of pesticides as they take in more of these chemicals pound for pound than adults, are often in close contact to pesticides on the grounds, have higher hand mouth behavior, and have developing organs that are uniquely susceptible to toxics. Pesticide exposure occurs from playing on treated lawns or grounds and is easily tracked into the home on shoes and from pets. Childhood cancers associated with pesticides include leukemia, neuroblastoma, ewings sarcoma, wilms tumor and cancers of the brain, colon and testes.² A dramatic study comparing children ages 4-5 in two groups

¹ Environment and Human Health, Inc. *Risk from Lawn-Care Pesticides*. 2003. p. 11.

² Ibid. p. 24.



showed cognitive impairment of children that were exposed to pesticides versus those that were not. Exposed children were unable to draw stick figures when asked whereas unexposed children performed this task easily.³

The risk of harm from exposure to pesticides may not be seen right away but that does not mean that we should avoid taking precautions, particularly when the evidence is so compelling. Pesticide use has grown significantly in the U.S. over the past decades. That means exposure has increased dramatically. These chemicals get into our bodies, cross the placenta and are found in umbilical cord blood! They leach into our waterways and are tracked into homes. Reducing exposure by restricting the use of these chemicals on the places where children play most is good common sense and good public policy. We strongly support HB 6897 and urge you to pass it this session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne B. Hulick".

Anne Hulick, RN, MS, JD

³ Contaminated Without Consent. <http://www.contaminatedwithoutconsent.org/home.php>