



March 2, 2015

RE: Support for H.B. No. 6897

Dear Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and members of the Committee on Children,

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut (CT NOFA) strongly supports H.B. 6897, An act concerning the application of pesticides at state-operated parks, athletic fields and playgrounds.

The Committee on Children is to be commended for taking this important to protect the health of children who use our state parks, athletic fields and playgrounds. This bill will also protect wildlife, pollinators and streams from the negative effects of toxic pesticides.

We've known for a long time that lawn care pesticides are especially dangerous for children because they are growing quickly and spend more time close to the ground.

About 25 years ago, CT NOFA understood that there are safety problems with lawn care pesticides, that citizens are interested in limiting their exposure to these chemicals and that some land care professionals are able to manage parks, athletic playgrounds using non-toxic methods.

Over the years since then, our Organic Land Care Program has trained hundreds of professionals in organic techniques. Helpfully, incredible progress has also been made in creating non-toxic pest control products, especially microbial and biochemical ones over the past decades.

We have also discovered more potential human and environmental health problems with conventional pesticides.

Although CT NOFA does not support IPM as a substitute for a pesticide ban, the allowance for the use of IPM for two years should make the transition easier for maintenance staff who are not familiar with non-toxic methods.

The requirement for notification is very important to children's health.

It will be wonderful if the state of Connecticut takes the lead and sets a good example by removing these toxic substances from its parks, athletic fields and playgrounds.

Thank you for accepting testimony on this important bill.

If you have any questions, please contact me at bduesing@mac.com or at (203) 231-1790.

Best regards,

Bill Duesing
Organic Advocate
CT NOFA