Dear Committee on Children,

I urge you to support the H.B. No. 6897 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES AT STATE-OPERATED PARKS, ATHLETIC FIELDS AND PLAYGROUNDS.

There are many studies that link toxic lawn pesticides with birth defects, developmental delays, behavioral disorders, motor dysfunction, neurotoxicity and other diseases. Children and pets are particularly susceptible. Lawn pesticides can be tracked inside of schools and homes where they can contaminate air, dust, carpets and other surfaces. I believe the solution is to reduce these toxic substances by banning them in certain places and using organic lawn care in its place. With so many unknowns and with plausible evidence of harm to children, it makes no sense for our children to be involuntarily exposed to the unnecessary use of these toxic chemicals especially when there are safe, effective, affordable alternatives. Facts about lawn pesticides.

- Of 30 commonly used lawn pesticides, 19 have studies linking them with cancer, 13 are linked with birth defects, 21 with reproductive effects, 15 with neurotoxicity or abnormal brain development.1
- Children are particularly susceptible because of their rapid growth and decreased ability to detoxify toxins.2, 3. This is particularly true for the developing child in utero.
- Studies link some lawn pesticides to hyperactivity, developmental delays, behavioral disorder, and motor dysfunction.,4, 5, 6
- A Study in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute found that home and garden use of pesticides can increase the risk of childhood leukemia by almost seven times.7
- The lag time between environmental exposure and the development of lymphoma can be as long as 20 years.8
- Lawn pesticides can be tracked inside of schools where they can persist for long periods of time contaminating air, dust, surfaces, and carpets and exposing children to these toxic chemicals even if they are not in contact with the grass.9
- There is provision for pesticide use if there is a condition that threatens the health and safety of the children. For example, an underground wasp nest or an infestation of ticks.
- There are significant gaps in the safety testing of toxic lawn pesticides.10
- Lawn pesticides are not tested for long term toxicity unless they are also used on food crops.
- Lawn pesticides are not tested in the combinations and formulations in which they are actually used. Yet, these combinations and formulations can be more toxic than the pure active ingredient.
- It is the chemical companies themselves that supply the safety testing data to the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Lawn pesticides can contaminate well water. 11% of residential wells tested in a Connecticut town showed the presence of one or more lawn pesticides.11
- There are safe, effective, affordable alternatives to using toxic lawn pesticides. A number of towns in Connecticut have successfully switched to pesticide-free organic lawn care.12, 13

References

1 www.beyondpesticides.org/lawn/factsheets/30health.pdf

2 National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences. 1993. Pesticides in the Diets of Infants and Children, National Academy Press, Washington, DC: 184-185.

3 US EPA, Office of the Administrator, Environmental Health Threats to Children, EPA 175-F-96-001, September 1996. See also: www.epa.gov/pesticides/food/pest.htm.

4 National Research Council. 2000. Scientific frontiers in developmental toxicology and risk assessment.

5 Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Physicians for Social Responsibility, The National Environmental Trust, and The Learning Disabilities Association of America. 2000. Polluting our future: Chemical pollution in the U.S. that affects child development and learning. www.net.org/health/tri_report.pdf (accessed 6/2/05).

6 Cox C. 2004. Journal Of Pesticide Reform. Vol. 24 (4) citing: Garry, V.F. et al. 2002. "Birth defects, season of conception, and sex of children born to pesticide applicators living in the Red River Valley of Minnesota." Environmental Health Perspectives, 110 (Suppl. 3):441-449.

7 Lowengart, R. et al. 1987. "Childhood Leukemia and Parent's Occupational and Home Exposures," Journal of the National Cancer Institute 79:39.

8 Environmental Health, www.ehjournal.net/content/10/1/63 (June 2011)

9 Nishioka, M., et al. 1996. Environmental Science Technology, 30:3313-3320; Nishioka, M., et al. 2001. Environmental Health Perspectives, 109(11).

10 EPA registration requires only that the pure chemical compound of the pesticide be tested.

11 A survey of Private Drinking Water Wells For Lawn and Tree Care Pesticides in a Connecticut Town, Environment and Human Health, Inc.1999.

12 See the Northeast Organic Farming Association Connecticut Chapter's information on organic land care. www.ctnofa.org/OrganicLandCare/OLC.htm

13 Managing Healthy Sports Fields: A Guide to Using Organic Materials for Low-Maintenance and Chemical-Free Playing Fields by Paul D. Sachs, January 2004

Respectfully yours,
Carol Peringer
61 Poverty Hollow Rd
Newtown, CT 06470
203-240-9583