

Testimony for HB 6897

TO: Children's Committee

My name is Christine O'Day (Wilton, CT) and I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 6897.

I would like to see pesticides banned at state-operated parks, athletic fields and playgrounds as I am very concerned about the health effects these toxic chemicals can have on young children. There is no way to know when areas have been sprayed with pesticides. Their residues remain on the grass, trees and seep into the ground in these areas that are intended for children's play. While I don't believe these toxic chemicals are safe for any humans or pets, young children (and pets) are most vulnerable as they are closest to the ground and young children, especially, frequently touch the ground and then put their hands into their mouths.

While it's easy to believe these pesticides are EPA-approved and, therefore, safe, nothing could be further from the truth. These chemicals are designed "to kill" and contain extremely toxic ingredients, both the active and inert ingredients. Like so many other situations, it's the chemical companies who profit from these pesticides who are also responsible for the safety testing which is always deemed safe for humans. There is a long history with pesticides causing serious harm to humans. * These chemicals are linked to cancer, endocrine disruption and other serious health effects in humans. They certainly do not belong on the ground where children are playing.

I should add that Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is not the solution as there is virtually no oversight with this method. The solution is organic, less toxic methods. This is what would be best for our children, our pets, our own health and our environment.

The only "winner" if these pesticides are allowed to be continually used on these areas are the pesticide companies themselves, certainly not our children. I hope you will support HB 6897. Thank you.

* I am currently reading the book Poison Spring by E.G. Vallianatos who worked as a scientist at the EPA for 25 years mostly in the Pesticide area. His book describes how these toxic pesticides have become so widespread in our country and Americans have a false sense that they are safe. He also describes many situations where people have been exposed to approved pesticides and suffered serious health consequences, both acute and chronic. I highly recommend the book if you are interested in learning more.

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