

TESTIMONY RE: Raised Bill No. 6897 AN ACT CONCERNING APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES ON STATE OPERATED PARKS, ATHELETIC FIELDS AND PLAYGROUNDS.

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

March 3, 2015

Good Afternoon, Co-Chairs, Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and esteemed members of the Committee on Children. I want to thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA), as a founding partner of the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut. I am Hacad Boros, RN MSN current Environmental Health Coordinator for the Connecticut Nurses Association. I am also a member of the National Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments and currently serve on their Public Health Committee.

I am supporting: Raised Bill No. 6897 AN ACT CONCERNING APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES ON STATE OPERATED PARKS, ATHELETIC FIELDS AND PLAYGROUNDS.

There is a strong body of scientific research that provides evidence of the link between pesticide exposure and the rise in childhood cancers (leukemia and brain cancer being predominant), birth defects, endocrine disruption, nervous system damage, and immunosuppression. No matter if the current research is enough "proof" or not; we, as concerned citizens, should consider the Precautionary Principle when it comes to the health of children and the public at large. This means that, wherever there is some evidence of harm, we should take precautionary measures until all the research is in on a matter.

The Connecticut Nurses Association supports this bill that would extend the ban on lawn care pesticides to all State Operated Parks, Athletic Fields and Playgrounds because it would allow for further reduction of exposure for CT's youth, and all citizens. This is in accordance with recommendations by the EPA and the World Health Organization:

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/kidpesticide.htm>

<http://www.who.int/heca/infomaterials/en/pesticides.pdf>

According to the EPA children are at a greater risk for some pesticides for a number of reasons. Pound for pound children ingest more air, water and food than an adult. Children's internal organs are still rapidly developing and maturing and their enzymatic, metabolic, and immune systems may provide less natural protection than those of an adult. There are "critical periods" in human development when exposure to a toxin can permanently alter the way an individual's biological system operates. Playing in parks and on athletic fields where pesticides are commonly applied increases their chances of exposure to pesticides. It is also critical to note that exposure to pesticides begins as a fetus because the placenta is not a barrier from these chemicals. Pregnant women who

are exposed to pesticides are indirectly exposing their unborn babies. Therefore this is truly a public health concern. By making this public health initiative to reduce CT citizen's exposure to pesticides, this legislation has the potential to decrease healthcare costs associated with cancers and a wide range of other chronic diseases. The moral and financial benefit of this proactive legislation is clear; it is about protecting our children, the next generation and the public.

It is concerning, however, that the comprehensive existing legislation will be substituted for a weaker "Integrative Pest Management" approach; as the use of those pesticides will continue to have an affect on the health of children especially. Integrative Pest Management should not be a substitute for a pesticide ban but the allowance for the use of IPM for two years should make the transition easier. It is my understanding that the there are research-based methods for non-toxic pest management and training opportunities within the state already.

Thank you for your time. We urge the committee to vote favorably to support Raised Bill No. 6897 AN ACT CONCERNING APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES ON STATE OPERATED PARKS. ATHELETIC FIELDS AND PLAYGROUNDS.

Thank you

Hacah Boros, RN MSN  
Connecticut Nurses Association, Environmental Health Coordinator  
Adjunct Professor, Central Connecticut State University

31 April Lane, Planstville, CT 06479