



North Stonington Public Schools

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Testimony
North Stonington Public Schools
Before the Environment Committee
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The North Stonington School District opposes SB-366 and SB-1063 which extends the ban on the use of integrated pest management plans to high schools and other public grounds.

Today approximately 75% of our athletic fields have become unusable and unsafe due to grub infestation (attracting animals that dig into the turf) and our inability to treat the situation. Prior to the ban, pesticides were applied only when the facility was not in use and applied under an integrated pest management program using the lowest levels. Student safety was our main concern. We have followed the current recommendations of aeration and over-seeding. The results have been less than satisfactory, as well as very costly. The town has spent \$30,000 in an effort to rectify the situation and have had to appropriate another \$30,000 in the 2015-16 budget; a costly burden for taxpayers. This expenditure may possibly help, but will not eliminate, the grub issue. In September of 2014, it was necessary to close our fields and all games were moved to other sites which meant that our student athletes were bussed to all events. This has been very disappointing to our students, as well as an added burden to families having to travel to all games and has resulted in additional costs to our district. Our students have always been proud to play on fields that were manicured and well maintained and other schools regularly commented on the beautiful condition of our turf. This is no longer the case since the current K-8 ban went into effect.

Our district is small consisting of one elementary school and one combination middle school/high school being in close proximity to each other. We are unique in that it is a campus atmosphere and when our fields are impacted it affects more than just the high school. These fields are also a means for carrying out the physical education curriculum for the middle school and the high school. No access to the athletic fields affects the academic program and our teachers' ability to teach classes. North Stonington does not have any other facilities for our students' use. The closure of these fields has been extremely disheartening to our students and families.

Being unable to treat with herbicides has contributed to the growth of clover (attracting bees and posing a risk for many students allergic to bees) and poison ivy, which poses a health issue as well.

The attached photos clearly reveal the condition of the athletic fields prior to the July 1, 2010 ban and the devastating present condition. North Stonington is seeking a solution to this issue and is hoping for a resolution that will restore our athletic complex and return our students to their home fields.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Prior to July 1, 2010





Prior to July 1, 2010























