RB 76. AA AUTHORIZING MUNICIPALITIES TO RESTRICT THE USE OF PESTICIDES IN CERTAIN AREAS OF THE MUNICIPALITY OR ON CERTAIN TYPES OF PROPERTIES.

RB 5999 AAC PESTICIDE REGULATION IN THE STATE.

Support/ Support

To: Chairmen Sen. Christine Cohen and Rep. Mike Demicco,  
And Honorable Members of the Committee:

Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is a statewide, non-profit coalition of river organizations, individuals, and businesses formed to protect Connecticut’s waters by promoting sound water policies, uniting and strengthening the state’s many river groups, and providing education on water stewardship.

Raised Bill 5999 (calling for a stronger state capability to enforce protective pesticide rules) is evidence for the need to pass RB 76, which allows town to protect themselves. It has been clear for years that the state is unable to manage its pesticide permitting program in a professional or protective manner. The department is working with a skeleton staff. There’s no time to analyze applications for accuracy. There’s no one in the field. Even applications for pesticide use in sensitive, high-quality waters can slide by with few questions if any.

Town officials who care, especially on wetlands commissions, are chronically frustrated. They are right there, but they are told they have no authority to interfere. The only authority is the state, which hasn’t come to town in years. The state is not happy with this situation either. There are responsible, expert state staffers who would love to serve the public better through a prudent pesticide program. Give them that chance.

It’s disappointing to see such adamant opposition from golf course managers, landscapers, and greenhouse operators. These are powerful interests. But I know that many in these professions do care about good management practices. One of our directors at Rivers Alliance was a golf course turf manager. Here’s anecdotal evidence of the problem. About seven years ago, my husband and I were getting on a plan in South Carolina, and he somehow set off the bomb alert. We were pulled aside, and Geiger-countered, and questioned. Then the security officer asked.
“Have you been playing golf? That’s usually what causes these problems.” We had not played golf, but we had walked a considerable distance over a lovely lawn. Fertilizers and pesticides spread on golf courses and lawns can stick to your clothes and shoes long enough to set off a bomb alarm. Recommendation: don’t track this stuff into your home. It’s not healthy for persons or pets.

Thank you for raising these bills. We like to think we are using pesticides carefully, but we are nowhere near careful enough. We are often simply reckless. We are doing great harm to ourselves and destroying pollinators and other species of animals and plants on which we depend.

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