

# **EXPLOITERS** **FRIENDS** **of ANIMALS**

March 6, 2020  
Environment Committee  
Hartford, CT 06106  
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President/ Friends of Animals

## **Re: Support for Raised Bill 292: An Act Concerning Electronic Documents and Pesticide Regulation in the State**

Friends of Animals puts habitat protection of wildlife as a core mission and as such, our organization and its state members are concerned about the amount of pesticides pumped into the environment each year. Based in Darien, our organization, an international wildlife advocacy and animal protection nonprofit which has 6,000 state members, has worked to reduce the amount of pesticides by working with local officials to initiate organic land management methods on municipal greens and promote safe lawns in neighborhoods.

One of the issues we have encountered however is that it is very difficult to obtain information about what pesticides are being used on properties in our communities. We specifically requested such information from local golf clubs but many did not respond. While Toronto, for example, requires golf courses and other property owners to release pesticide information, in Connecticut you must obtain this information from the state Department of Environmental Protection by reviewing reams of documents. The spirit of our state's Freedom of Information laws is for the government's records to be transparent for citizens to review. This is not the case regarding pesticide records. Thus, state residents are deprived of knowing what toxins are being used on lawns and fields around their homes, pets, and children nor do we know what chemicals could be adversely affecting our wildlife or whether the permits for the pesticide applications were filed properly and whether DEEP is providing adequate oversight.

It is for this reason we support this bill which would require that DEEP keep an electronic searchable database made available for public inspection.

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*Friends of Animals, an international animal protection organization founded in N.Y. in 1957 and headquartered in Darien, CT, advocates for the rights of free-living and domestic animals. FoA is proud to be a woman-founded and -led organization for more than 60 years.*

