

House Republican Press Release

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Greenwich Delegation: Supports Bi-Partisan Ban on Pesticides on School Grounds



“Making Schools Safer for Kids to Play”

HARTFORD – State Representatives Livvy R. Floren, R-149th District, Lile R. Gibbons, R-150th District and Claudia “Dolly” Powers, R- 151st District joined a bipartisan coalition of legislators, health professionals and child advocates today to urge passage of legislation that extends a ban on the use of pesticides at day care and elementary schools to middle and high schools.

There are currently two complementary bills making their way through the legislative process. HB-5234, *An Act Banning Pesticide Use On School Grounds* would extend a ban on the use of pesticides at day care and elementary schools to middle and high schools. HB-7096, *An Act Concerning Pesticide Applications At Schools And The Use Of Environmentally Sensitive Cleaning And Maintenance Products In Schools* extends a ban on the use of pesticides at day care and elementary schools to all schools and eliminates toxic cleaning products from schools in order to fully protect students against harmful chemicals.

Rep. Powers said, “I thank Rep. Floren for leading on this common sense legislation. As a gardener I rarely ever use anything on my own property, so it makes sense to extend this same caution to school property.”

Rep. Lile Gibbons said, “Thanks to Rachel Carson who warned us of the long-term harm of DDT, we stopped spraying that toxic chemical on our trees and fields. We know that contact with pesticides and chemicals are not compatible with healthy living. It is time to err on the side of caution and ban these pesticides from use anywhere our children and grandchildren learn and play.”

Groups such as the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut, the Watershed Partnership, Connecticut Nurses Association, Connecticut PTA and the Environment and Human Health, Inc. have joined together to support this legislation.

Studies have shown

The executive director of the Watershed Partnership, Dr. Jerome A. Silbert stated that children are particularly vulnerable to the risks of cancer, immune disorders and neurodevelopmental disorders. The

National Academy of Sciences reports that 50% of lifetime pesticide exposure occurs during the first five years of life. Studies link some lawn pesticides to hyperactivity, developmental delays, behavioral disorders and motor dysfunction. Studies show that children living in households where pesticides are used suffer elevated rates of leukemia, brain cancer and soft tissue sarcoma.

Dr. Silbert cited the town of Cheshire which is at the end of its second year of chemical free field maintenance. Even with a heavy schedule (over 50 events per season) the main football field is in better condition than it was under conventional turf care.

Current Law

In 2005, the law restricted the use of lawn care pesticides at public and private preschools, elementary schools, child day care centers and group day care homes. A child day care center is defined as providing care to more than 12 children and for group day care homes who provide care to, between seven and 12 children. This law went into effect January 1, 2006 except for emergencies and completely bans their application starting July 1, 2008.

Under current law, a lawn care pesticide is defined as a pesticide registered by the EPA and labeled according to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act for lawn, garden, and ornamental use.

Rep. Floren said, "Pesticides are known to be detrimental to humans of all ages, and I do not want to see them used in areas that affect our young people. Future generations of children should be able to learn and play at school without threat of breathing in pesticides. Extending the ban on the use of pesticides to middle and high schools will affect more than 260,000 children in grades 6-12."