

Connecticut's 'pesticide-free schools' under attack

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In 2005, Connecticut passed a landmark law prohibiting the use of hazardous pesticides in schools. And ever since, the state has been successfully ensuring that [children](#) are exposed to fewer chemicals where they learn, play and grow.

Now this historic program is under attack. A [proposed state law](#) — supported by the pesticide industry — would reverse Connecticut's strong stance on keeping schools pesticide-free. Connecticut groups and concerned legislators are [fighting back](#).

The first of its kind in the country, Connecticut's law directs schools in the state to control pests on all school grounds — including playing fields — without use of toxic pesticides. As it stands, the law works. Kids are [exposed to fewer chemicals](#), and in the years since the original bill was introduced, a robust natural lawn and pest control industry has developed to meet the statewide demand.

Don't mess with success

The pesticide industry continues to lobby the legislature to roll back the law, proposing "integrated pest management" programs instead that allow use of chemical pesticides at the discretion of pesticide applicators.

As our colleagues at [Beyond Pesticides](#) point out, losing Connecticut's law could have ripple effects across the country. The state has provided inspiration to New York, which passed a similar law in 2011, as well as [several other states](#) that are considering measures to protect schoolchildren from pesticides. A rollback in Connecticut could slow or even reverse this powerful momentum.

Health advocates and concerned legislators, including Rep. Ed Meyer, the author of the original pesticide-free schools bill, are holding a [press conference](#) on March 8 to rally support for the existing law. Co-sponsors of the event include [Environment and Human Health](#), [Citizens Campaign for the Environment](#) and the [Watershed Partnership](#), among others.

Kids need extra protection

Developing minds and bodies are [especially vulnerable](#) to harms from pesticides — and this was the driving force behind Connecticut's law. This fact is not in dispute, and [the science seems to get stronger](#) every day with numerous studies linking childrens' pesticide exposure with [developmental delays](#), [cancer](#), asthma and other health problems.

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There's no reason to reverse Connecticut's powerful stance providing school kids with the pesticide-free learning environments they deserve.

We'll be tracking the pesticide-industry's proposed legislation, and working with partners in the state to keep the existing successful law on the books. Stay tuned for ways you can help.

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