



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian X. Foley

# **Senate Passes Landmark Environmental Legislation Sponsored by Senator Foley**

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ISSUE:

- [Environment](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Going Green](#)
- [Earth Day](#)
- [Children](#)



Law will protect children by banning harmful pesticides from school fields and playgrounds  
The New York State Senate passed landmark environmental legislation (S. 4983C) sponsored by Senator Brian X. Foley (D – Blue Point) that protects children by banning the use of harmful pesticides on school fields and playgrounds.

Numerous studies have pointed to serious health risks associated with pesticides, especially on developing brains and bodies. With the advent of alternative lawn care products that are both safer and cheaper, there is simply no reason to continue to use pesticides on school grounds and endanger the health of children.

“I am proud to sponsor this major legislation and lead the fight to protect our children from harm,” said Senator Brian X. Foley who has championed environmental causes throughout his career in public service. “Given the potential harm that pesticides present for our children during crucial developmental stages and the availability of cost-effective alternatives, it is simply unacceptable to continue to use pesticides to care for fields and playgrounds where our children spend hours playing.”

Currently, pesticides are used in sprays for aesthetic maintenance of lawns and fields. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, pesticides can cause nervous, reproductive, and immune system damage; a concern that is amplified in children, as their bodies are in the developmental stages and, therefore, more susceptible to long-term damage.

“This legislation provides new protections for the new millennium. Children face many potential hazards at schools such as peer pressure, drugs, and bullying – pesticide exposure should not be among them. Embracing the protection of our

children's future is a true tribute to the 40th anniversary of Earth Day. Congratulations to Senator Foley and Assemblyman Englebright as the sponsors of this bill," said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director, Citizens Campaign for the Environment.

"This bill will protect New York's children from highly toxic and hazardous pesticides in school yards and playgrounds," said Saima Anjam, representing the Environmental Advocates of New York, a non-profit environmental advocacy organization. "We applaud the state senate and the legislation's sponsor, Senator Brian X. Foley, for taking this step to protect our families."

Shaw Kilmurray, Board Chair of Long Island Sierra Club praised the legislation. "Scientific studies link exposure to lawn care pesticides with an increased risk of asthma, several types of cancer, nervous and immune system damage, liver or kidney damage, reproductive impairment, birth defects and disruption of endocrine system. They present special risks to children who spend much of their time playing outdoors," said Kilmurray. "As if that is not reason enough to ban their use anywhere near a school or playground, on Long Island we are also concerned about pesticide runoff which pollutes ground and surface water which threatens the safety of our drinking water supply, and these pesticides are toxic to aquatic and marine organisms. As a parent, I applaud Sen. Foley for taking a stand to protect the health and safety of our children, and speaking as the Board Chair of the Long Island Sierra Club, we are 100% behind any bill that helps to preserve our drinking water supply."

"Children are particularly vulnerable to the health effects of pesticides and exposing them to toxic pesticides in their schools and day care is unacceptable because safe, effective alternatives are available. The passage of this bill banning chemical pesticides from school playgrounds and fields is a great victory in protecting the children of New York State." said Demosthenes Maratos, Program Director for the Neighborhood Network, a Long Island environmental organization. "Senator Foley and Assemblyman Englebright are to be congratulated on moving this important legislation through to a successful conclusion."

"With the passage of this legislation, parents can see their children off to school with more peace of mind, knowing they will be safe from hazardous chemicals that can cause permanent damage," said Sen. Foley, who serves on the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee.