



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian X. Foley

## **Senator Foley, Assemblyman Englebright Hail Signing of Landmark Pesticide Legislation**

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Senator Brian X. Foley (D – Blue Point) and Assemblyman Steve Englebright (D – Setauket) hailed the signing of the Child Safe Playing Fields Act by Governor Paterson. This law protects children and the environment by banning the use of harmful pesticides on school fields and playgrounds, as well as at daycare centers.

Pesticides are used in many communities on Long Island to maintain lawns and playing fields. These substances have been shown to cause harm to both the environment and the children who utilize the fields, including contaminating groundwater, and causing nervous, reproductive and immune system disorders. A recent study published in the journal of Pediatrics also links exposure to pesticides to the development of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Although

research regarding the link between pesticides and childhood diseases and disorders continues, the result is clear: pesticides are dangerous and need to be limited around the most vulnerable members of our community.

“Today is a great day for our children and our environment,” said Senator Foley. “The signing of this legislation will result in a sharp reduction in children’s exposure to pesticides that were applied on school grounds. Keeping pesticides away from our children will protect them from the harmful side effects that could result, including, as a recent study suggested, the development of ADHD. Any time we can reduce the use of pesticides it a win for the environment as well.”

“I’m delighted that after nine years of effort that we have this important bill to protect our children from the hazards of pesticides and other poisons in the environment,” said Assemblyman Englebright. “That we’ve been able to accomplish this in the midst of such a difficult year makes it seem all that much more rewarding, and knowing that it will help protect our kids from early exposure that may lead to cancer is the most important part of this achievement.”

“This is a dramatic and historic change in policy for our state to protect our children,” said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment. “Congratulations to Senator Foley, Assemblyman Englebright and Governor Paterson for getting the job done. New York can look forward to a healthier, safer generation.”

“We are elated and thankful to Governor Paterson for signing the Safe School Grounds bill into law,” said Demosthenes Maratos, Program Director for the Long Island Neighborhood Network. “Children are particularly vulnerable to the health effects of pesticides and exposing them to toxic pesticides in their schools and daycare facilities is unacceptable when safe, effective alternatives are available. Senator Foley and Assemblyman Englebright are to be congratulated for their leadership in bringing this historic bill to a successful conclusion. This is the most significant pesticide legislation to be enacted in New York State in many years.”

The law amends various provisions in the law to allow the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Health to develop guidance on pesticide alternatives and to limit the use of pesticides on school grounds and at daycare centers. The law includes provisions to allow for the emergency application of pesticides in rare and exceptional cases. However, with alternative lawn products

on the market that are both safer and more cost-effective for consumers, it is believed that these instances will be few and far between.

The legislation was signed into law by Governor Paterson on Tuesday.