

February 27, 2025

Re: H5340 Requires the producer of artificial turf and turf infill sold or distributed in Rhode Island to report its chain of custody, from installation to use, repurposing, recycling and disposal

Dear Committee members:

As a Rhode Island resident, I'm writing in support of H5340. There is so much "mystery" and misinformation in the synthetic turf industry. I'm very concerned about the PFAS which is used in the manufacturing process (even in so called PFAS free products). The extrusion machines that make the little blades of grass require PFAS as a lubricant. This results in PFAS covered little blades of "grass". This is not part of the ingredients so declaration is murky. This results in contamination over time, we have little knowledge and accountability of components and ingredients in Synthetic turf. This is especially concerning at install (what are we being exposed to) and at removal. As we start to near end of life for many of the synthetic turf fields in our area, we must know what is in these materials and where/how they are being disposed of. Rhode Island has very limited resources to handle all of this material. As far as I can tell, there is no actual recycling available despite what manufacturers claim. Creating rules about what new materials can be used, what's in them, and what happens at the end of their life is essential so that we can be as gentle as possible to our existing disposal resources.

Concerns about these forever chemicals ending up in ground water or our rivers are pervasive in our communities. (think North Smithfield water contamination near the recent turf field)

This fall, Barrington voters resoundingly rejected a ballot question asking whether the town could use already approved funds to build a synthetic field. The school committee is persisting and using other funds to build a synthetic field. The town newspaper is filled with letters to the editor and community members are signing petitions and threatening lawsuits over it. There is just too much concerning evidence. Communities don't want it installed.

Please support this legislation that creates accountability for installers and end of life disposal. Hopefully this accountability will lead to other options being considered throughout the process.

Thank you

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