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From: Deborah Brown <busydbee2012@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2026 3:02 AM
To: House Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Subject: Written Testimony in Support of RI House Bill 7141-Regarding Chain of Custody Requirements for Artificial Turf fields in RI

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To: Chairperson Bennett and Honorable members of the House Environment and Natural Resource Committee

I am submitting testimony in support of H7141, which would establish a required chain of custody process for artificial turf fields from installation through removal.

I recently returned to live in my hometown of Burrillville. I became aware that local leaders were using Fed. Grant funds to install AT at the local HS football field. I am opposed to the installation of artificial turf fields due to the known and potential risks they pose to children's health and safety as well as potential and real harm to the environment, I strongly support this bill as a necessary step toward transparency, monitoring, and accountability.

As other testimony has stated, Artificial turf (AT) fields introduce synthetic materials that can release PFAS and other toxic substances into the air, soil, and water. Children and young athletes are uniquely vulnerable to these exposures through direct contact, inhalation of dust, and prolonged use. The long-term health implications of "forever chemicals" remain deeply concerning and insufficiently understood, particularly with repeated exposure beginning at a young age.

In my own community, an artificial turf field has recently been installed directly over the town's only freshwater aquifer which also is adjacent to a river system that ultimately feeds into Narragansett Bay. This raises serious concerns about irreversible contamination of drinking water sources and downstream ecosystems, with consequences that may not become fully apparent for years or decades.

Although H7141 does not ban AT, it does require critical information: who is responsible, what materials are used, where they are installed, when they are placed and removed, and how they are managed at the end of the AT

acceptable use cycle. This knowledge is essential for assessing risk, responding to harm, and ensuring accountability should environmental or public health impacts occur.

If AT fields continue to be installed in Rhode Island, the public deserves full transparency and a system that allows for monitoring, oversight, and responsibility. H7141 lays the groundwork for establishment of a system that unfortunately may become a necessary safeguard for our children, our water resources, and our environment. For these reasons, I strongly urge the Committee to support and pass H7141.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Deborah E. Brown, LCSW
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Sent from my iPhone