



March 28, 2024

Vermont General Assembly
Committee on Human Services
Vermont State House
115 State Street, Montpelier, VT

Written Testimony expressing concern over Senate Bill No. 25:

Submitted by:
Melanie Taylor
President and CEO
Synthetic Turf Council (STC)
2331 Rock Spring Road, Forest Hill, MD 21050

Dear Chair Wood, Vice Chair Brumsted, and members of the Committee on Human Services

My name is Melanie Taylor, President and CEO of the Synthetic Turf Council (STC). On behalf of the STC, I am writing to express serious concerns over the current language of Senate Bill No.25 and what it could mean for families and communities across the state of Vermont if implemented in its present form.

As a 501(c)6 trade association, for more than 20 years STC has been representing the synthetic turf industry. We represent over 200 members and promote industry excellence through voluntary guidelines, certifications, and other learning platforms. Our membership includes representatives from every stage of installing and maintaining a turf field, including builders, design professionals, civil engineers, testing labs, maintenance providers, manufacturers, suppliers, installation contractors, infill and shock pad suppliers and specialty service companies.

Communities, schools, businesses, and families across the country choose synthetic turf because of the significant benefits it offers, including being accessible year-round, being more affordable to maintain, and protecting the environment through reduced water and chemical use. The synthetic turf industry is proud to deliver quality products that make a positive difference and are used by thousands of communities nationwide.

Environmental benefits of synthetic turf

There are many significant environmental benefits to using turf. First, turf [greatly reduces](#) water use and reduces water pollution compared to what's needed to support grass alternatives. One full-size synthetic turf sports field saves between 500,000 and 1 million gallons of water each year. Secondly, the use of synthetic turf reduces the need for toxic chemicals. With runoff of toxic pesticides and fertilizers as a principal cause of water pollution, synthetic turf [eliminates the need](#)



for nearly a billion pounds of harmful pesticides, fertilizers, fungicides, and herbicides which are used to maintain grass.

When it comes to recycling, there are several examples of the work STC members are doing to improve the recyclability of turf: [TenCate](#) recently announced a program to recycle artificial grass to efficiently and effectively recycle synthetic turf into feedstock that can then be reused to create new turf and other valuable products. [Re-Match](#) also has a patented process that's [ETV-verified](#) to recycle turf fields. [BestPLUS](#)'s GreenBoard, a plastic lumber product, is made with 98% recycled plastic, at least 40% from recycled artificial turf. And [Shaw Sports Turf](#) recycles old turf into performance shock pads for new turf fields.

Functionality and access benefits of synthetic turf

In addition to its environmental benefits, turf expands an area's functionality and increases access for all communities. Synthetic turf allows families to enjoy its benefits and athletes to play [year-round](#), even in inclement weather conditions. In contrast, a [grass field](#) simply cannot remain usable after three or four days of use a week, in the rain, or during the months when grass doesn't grow. This is particularly valuable in a state like Vermont where weather conditions, particularly in the winter, can be extreme for significant periods during the year. Moreover, synthetic turf fields provide a space for [multi-purpose competition](#), allowing multiple sports to be played on a single field. On the other hand, as a sports field, synthetic turf expands access for all [communities](#), including underserved communities where resources for athletic and play fields are limited.

The synthetic turf industry's approach on PFAS

In regards to PFAS specifically, STC has worked with its members to ensure their products contain no intentionally-added PFAS constituents when manufactured. In 2024, STC members are committed to finding a standardized testing method to confirm that their products contain no intentionally-added PFAS constituents. As an example, STC member Tencate [announced](#) it removed even trace amounts of PFAS from its products. Additionally, STC members are working through ASTM International in formalizing a testing process to confirm that our members' products do not contain intentionally-added PFAS.

STC welcomes the opportunity to work with policymakers

Synthetic turf provides environmental benefits, increased access, and cost savings for communities across the country. Legislation that threatens to hinder communities' possibility to access these benefits should be reconsidered. The STC looks forward to working with lawmakers on the Committee to improve Bill S.25 to ensure communities in Vermont are able to continue to use turf and realize the benefits it offers to families, businesses, schools, and communities. We welcome the opportunity to work with policymakers on this legislation. STC is



committed to the safety of our product, good stewardship of the environment, and to the Vermont communities that use turf everyday.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Melanie Taylor
President and CEO
Synthetic Turf Council (STC)
www.syntheticturfcouncil.org