

James Melloh
South Portland
LD 1177

Honorable Committee Members,

As a physician I have great concern regarding the continuing installation of artificial turf fields in Maine and across the nation. There are several concerns:

Environmental and Health - fossil fuels effecting our climate are used to produce the plastic.

In that process toxic gases are released, creating health risks to surrounding communities. PFAS or one of the 20,000 similar products are used in turf production - industry claims of no PFAS have not been substantiated by appropriate testing.

Children who use the turf are exposed to these chemicals as well as endocrine disruptors, and other toxins. These same poisons enter our water systems via run-off.

In this run-off are also microplastics which are being shown to effect aquatic life.

Living soil is removed to place the turf killing vital organisms, creating run-off and a heat sink which further warms our climate.

Heat injuries, skin burns, dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke are significant risks to children whose bodies are more susceptible to same. Heat deaths of high school athletes is not insignificant. NFL players prefer the safety of natural turf, as does the US women's soccer team which sued to be able to play on it.

What happens in 8-10 years when turf needs to be replaced? Most turf is dumped somewhere legally or illegally. Recycling of turf is industry green-washing. Doing this chemically creates more toxic fumes effecting areas such as Cancer Alley. If made into chips we are further dispersing these toxins into the environment.

Turf requires washing with antimicrobial agents which further pollute our waterways. Please put a moratorium on turf installation in Maine until these concerns can be further evaluated.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,
James Melloh MD MS