

Environment Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6915

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SECOND-GENERATION

Title: ANTICOAGULANT RODENTICIDES.

Vote Date: 2/28/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/19/2025

File No.: 112

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to ban the use of second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs). SGARs pose a threat to wildlife and the ecosystem, as it is common for predators to eat rodents that have consumed SGARs, resulting in their death. In addition, there are cases of pets and children being poisoned by SGARs and of SGARs being introduced into water sources, potentially threatening the safety of drinking water and harming the aquatic life. Banning the use of SGARs (except in very narrow cases, as outlined by the bill) would help protect wildlife and water ways and prevent children and pets from being inadvertently exposed to dangerous chemicals.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Katy Dykes, Commissioner, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Commissioner Dykes submitted written testimony regarding the bill. She noted that DEEP has concerns that if SGARs were completely banned it could result in negative human health impacts, since in certain circumstances there are not viable alternatives to SGARs for combatting rodent infestations. She suggested that the bill should instead change the classification of SGARs from "general-use" to "restricted-use" so that they are only available to licensed pest professionals. Commissioner Dykes also wrote that "DEEP does not currently have the resources to develop new regulations, although the language is currently permissive, or complete the report currently required in this bill."

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Pamela Fasier-Abder, Board Member, Connecticut Audubon Society

Ms. Fasier-Abder submitted written testimony in support of the bill. She discussed the fact that the rats and mice that eat the second-generation rodenticides don't die immediately, and are often eaten by birds of prey, which usually results in the birds death.

Caroline Adams

Mrs. Adams submitted written testimony in support of the bill. Her testimony spoke to the danger that second generation rodenticides pose to wildlife, specifically predators such as foxes, owls, and hawks, and how the destruction of the native predator population disrupts the ecosystem in a way that can lead to an increase in the population of pests and decreasing biodiversity.

Claudia Allen, Thompson Resident

Claudia Allen submitted testimony in support of the bill. She discussed her success using non-lethal traps to relocate rats and mice, and to indicate her support for the use of rodent birth control as an alternative to rodenticides. She also noted detrimental impact of rodenticides on wildlife and the safety hazard they pose to pets and children.

Dr. Joyce Boom

Dr. Bloom submitted written testimony in support of the bill. She writes that Second Generation Anti-Coagulant Rodenticides (SGAR's) are used recklessly by licensed pest professionals in Connecticut, and that this ends up causing harm to the predator population that would naturally limit the growth of the rodent population. She also states that there are other methods of controlling the rodent population.

Robin Cannamela, President, Desmond's Army

Robin Cannamela submitted written testimony in support of the bill. She talked about the impact of her husky being poisoned by second generation rodenticides and noted that even after her dog recovered from being poisoned, they died at a young age, which was likely caused by the secondary effects of the rodenticide poisoning.

Joe Carney, Pest Control Technician

Mr. Carney submitted written testimony in support of the bill. He wrote about how, in his experience working in the extermination industry, the damage that is caused by second generation rodenticides outweighs the benefit they provide

Sandy Conlon

Sandy Conlon submitted testimony in support of the bill. She discussed the prevalence of bait boxes and the danger they pose to pets and children. She included pictures of bait boxes in her neighborhood, many of which were not weighed down or were in areas that regularly flood.

Susan Eastwood, Chapter Chair, Sierra Club CT

Susan Eastwood submitted written testimony in support of the bill, expressing the danger that rodenticides pose to pets and wildlife, and noting that there are safer alternatives.

Teresa Eickel, Executive Director, Interreligious Eco-Justice Network

Teresa Eickel submitted written testimony in support of the bill. She discussed the suffering that is caused to the animals that ingest rodenticides, as well as the damage that they do to the wildlife population. She also suggested that SGARs are not an effective solution to rodent problems, as the initial decline in the population that they cause is followed by a rapid population increase.

Annie Hornish, Connecticut Senior State Director, Humane World for Animals

Director Hornish submitted written testimony in support of the bill. She noted the harm that SGARs cause to wildlife. She also suggested that there should not be any exceptions for pest professionals, and specifically urged an amendment be made to remove lines 61-73, as they create additional costs and are not actually necessary for implementing a ban on SGARs.

Susan Pronovost, Executive Director, CT Greenhouse Growers Association

Susan Pronovost submitted written testimony regarding the bill. She expressed support for the general intention of the bill to ban SGARs, and specifically noted that banning SGARs would help protect public water supplied and control mosquito breeding areas. She suggested that changes be made to the bill to add greenhouses to the bill's list of agricultural activities, as greenhouses produce much of the state's vegetable supply and greenhouse crops are particularly vulnerable to being eaten by rodents.

Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

Lori Brown submitted written testimony in support of the bill, citing the danger to wildlife and pets and the alternatives to SGARs that are available. She also suggested that the bill should be amended to prohibit the use of SGARs completely rather than just restricting who they can be sold too, as if they are not completely banned pest professionals will continue to overuse them.

Lucy Dathan, State Representative, 142nd House District

Representative Dathan submitted written testimony in support of the bill. She discussed the detrimental impact that SGARs can have on the environment and wildlife and noted that there have been many cases of small children being poisoned by SGARs. Her testimony also discussed the fact that there are many alternative methods of pest control that do not require the use of SGARs, and that in British Columbia and California, where SGARs were banned, there was no subsequent public health crisis that resulted.

Over 555 people submitted similar written testimony in support of the bill. They wrote about the danger that SGARs pose to wildlife as well as pets and children and highlighted the other effective methods of pest control available and could be used as an alternative.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Thomas Dommermuth, Owner, Westconn Pest Control

Mr. Dommermuth submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. He discussed the importance of being able to use rodenticides to control the rodent population, especially in cases when a structure can't be completely sealed to prevent rodents from entered. He noted that professionals are trained on how to use rodenticides safely so that they pose a minimal risk of them causing harm.

Jon Gaeta, Senior Director of Government Affairs, RISE

Jon Gaeta submitted testimony in opposition to the bill. He discussed the regulatory authority that the EPA and DEEP have over SGARs and noted that they have already put restrictions in place to mitigate the risk they may pose. He noted that when used appropriately SGARs are an important tool to help control the rodent population and protect people from diseases transmitted from these rodents as well as the property damage they cause. He suggested that if further regulations are needed for SGARs they should be put in place by DEEP or the EPA.

Martin Garcia

Mr. Garcia submitted testimony opposing the bill. He wrote about the serious health risks caused by rodents and noted that limiting the use of rodenticides will give homeowners, businesses, and landlords fewer options for combating an infestation, leading to worsening infestations and property damage. Mr. Garcia suggested that the bill would put greater administrative burdens on exterminators and increase their costs.

Lenny Gorski, Owner, Shoreline Wildlife and Pest

Mr. Gorski submitted testimony in opposition to the bill. He suggested that although SGARs can cause secondary poisoning to predators and birds of prey, the rate at which it occurs is exaggerated. He wrote that pest professionals don't only rely on SGARs, and use other means of pest control when possible, but there are situations when SGARs are needed and there are no effective substitutes. He recommended that the use of SGARs be restricted to professionals who are trained to use them.

Millette Pest Control

Several individuals from Millette Pest Control submitted the same piece of written testimony in opposition to the bill. The testimony discussed the risk to public health that banning SGARs could cause, as well as the greater pest control costs that businesses like supermarkets and restaurants would face. It suggested that there are not appropriate alternatives to SGARs, and that there is not scientific data to suggest that banning SGARs would improve the health of the raptor population. The testimony also noted that the bill would place a greater regulatory burden on DEEP and that there is no phase out or transition plan suggested in the bill.

Paul Larson, President, The Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

Mr. Larson submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. He noted that farmers are careful when selecting what pest control methods to employ, but there are times when SGARs are necessary to use and are an important tool to help farmers to protect their crops. He suggested amending the bill to broaden the definition of agricultural use in section 7 (B).

Keith Bishop, President, Bishop's Orchards

Mr. Bishop submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. He wrote about the damage that rodents can cause to farms and farming operations and suggested that the bill be amended to allow SGARs to be used on all farms "... as defined in the state's comprehensive definition of agricultural farming, Connecticut General Statute Section 1-1q".

Michael Lawrence, Branch Manager, Ehrlich Pest Control

Mr. Lawrence submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. He wrote about the diseases that are spread by rodents, and how banning SGARs could be a danger to public health. He suggested that a better approach would be to further regulate the use of SGARs rather than imposing an outright ban.

Anthony Giovanni, State Policy Affairs Representative, Connecticut Pest Control Association

Mr. Giovanni submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. He wrote the regulations that are already applied to pest management professionals and the pest management industry. He discussed the importance of SGARs in controlling pests and doing so in a comprehensive and affordable manner. He also detailed the ways that rodents can pose a danger to public health, making it especially important to be able to control their population in an efficient and cost effective manner.

Over 25 people submitted similar pieces of written testimony in opposition to the bill.

They noted that there are situations in which SGARs are needed and there are no viable alternatives. They suggested that the EPA is already reviewing the safety of SGARs and is the best organization to manage regulations of SGARs. They also wrote about the burden that banning SGARs would impose on homeowners, pest professionals, and business owners, as well as the health hazards that rodents can pose and the role they play in the spread of disease.

Reported by: Lauren Kaiser Krause

Date: March 28, 2025