

SENATE, No. 3254

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 2, 2026

Sponsored by:

Senator RAJ MUKHERJI

District 32 (Hudson)

Senator LINDA R. GREENSTEIN

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Prohibits expenditure of Green Acres funds for purchase, use, installation, or replacement of artificial turf fields.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT prohibiting the expenditure of Green Acres funds for the
2 purchase, use, installation, or replacement of artificial turf fields
3 and supplementing P.L.2016, c.12 (C.13:8C-43 et seq.).
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*
7

8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. Synthetic turf infill is made of small, rubberized pellets
10 typically made from used tires which contain a myriad of chemicals
11 known to be harmful to humans, including carcinogens,
12 neurotoxins, and endocrine-disrupting chemicals.

13 b. A regular sized synthetic turf field contains 500,000 pounds
14 of plastic, which breaks down into microplastics and nanoplastics
15 that are subsequently incorporated in runoff that flows into streams
16 during heavy rains, causing environmental contamination, harm to
17 aquatic life, and a disruption of the State's delicate ecosystem.

18 c. Recent studies suggest that exposure to microplastics and
19 nanoplastics can cause negative health effects in humans, including,
20 but not limited to, oxidative stress, inflammation, immune
21 dysfunction, altered biochemical and energy metabolism, impaired
22 cell proliferation, disrupted microbial metabolic pathways,
23 abnormal organ development, and carcinogenicity.

24 d. To date, all studies of installed synthetic turf have found the
25 presence of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS),
26 nicknamed "forever chemicals" because they accumulate, rather
27 than break down, over time, and build up in the human body.

28 e. Recent studies suggest that exposure to PFAS, and the
29 resulting accumulation of PFAS in the human body, may be linked
30 to many health issues, including, but not limited to, decreased
31 fertility in women, developmental delays in children, increased risk
32 of certain cancers, reduced immune system response, thyroid
33 disease, and kidney and liver damage.

34 f. When exposed to direct sunlight, a synthetic turf field's
35 surface temperature can reach up to 72 degrees hotter than natural
36 grass, increasing the surrounding air temperature and placing
37 athletes at risk of dehydration, heat stress, burns, and heatstroke. In
38 addition, the rough surface of synthetic turf can cause abrasions,
39 known as turf burn.

40 g. Natural grass is free of the health and environmental hazards
41 associated with synthetic turf, and organic maintenance practices,
42 including frequent aeration and mowing, soil testing, and use of
43 organic fertilizers, can further mitigate environmental and health
44 risks by eliminating the need for toxic pesticides.

45 h. While synthetic turf is often touted as cost-effective, low-
46 maintenance, and water-saving, the environmental, health, and
47 safety risks greatly outweigh the intended benefits, and

1 municipalities, school districts, or State departments or agencies
2 should instead invest in safe, non-toxic, natural grass playing fields.

3

4 2. The moneys deposited in the "Preserve New Jersey Green
5 Acres Fund," established pursuant to section 6 of P.L.2016, c.12
6 (C.13:8C-48) or any other Green Acres Fund, shall not be used to
7 fund the purchase, use, installation, or replacement of artificial turf
8 fields.

9

10 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

11

12

13

STATEMENT

14

15 This bill would prohibit the expenditure of Green Acres funds for
16 the purchase, use, installation, or replacement of artificial turf.
17 Synthetic turf contains a myriad of chemicals known to be harmful
18 to humans, including carcinogens, neurotoxicants, and endocrine-
19 disrupting chemicals, as well as microplastics, nanoplastics, and
20 perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances. Natural grass is free
21 of the health and environmental hazards associated with synthetic
22 turf. While synthetic turf is often touted as cost-effective, low-
23 maintenance, and water-saving, the environmental, health, and
24 safety risks greatly outweigh the intended benefits.