



January 25th, 2024

Chairman Dylan Roberts
Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
200 E Colfax Avenue
SCR 352
Denver, CO 80203

Landscape Industry Comments on SB 5– Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation

The National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) is the national trade organization representing the \$4.9 billion landscape industry employing over 32,000 employees in the Centennial State. Member companies specialize in lawn care, landscape maintenance, tree care, irrigation, and water management. Landscape professionals throughout the nation work daily performing essential services to homes and businesses to maintain their landscapes, sustain the environment, and enhance and maintain healthy and safe green spaces.

As the original green industry, and stewards of the environment, we are always looking for ways to improve landscaping practices, including right plant right place, utilizing more efficient equipment, and embracing new technologies and materials.

I want to begin by thanking Chairman Roberts and the other stakeholders who participated in the development of Senate Bill 5. All parties involved share the same concerns over water usage in landscaping practices and want to work towards practical and ecologically beneficial solutions. While we understand that it is virtually impossible to draft a bill that pleases all stakeholders 100%, we do believe that the current version of the measure is significantly improved due to the input that has been incorporated. Thank you again, Senator Roberts, for allowing for significant stakeholder engagement and taking landscape workers' perspective into account with the added amendment.

Turf is an extremely important plant to our industry and the environment. Turf has many significant environmental and social benefits that cannot be understated. Turfgrass cools the air, reducing heat islands, produces oxygen, and sequesters CO₂ helping to provide clean air for Coloradans to breathe. It also helps to filter rainwater and prevent erosion and runoff, protecting the water quality of rivers and streams across the state. Furthermore, greenspaces enhance the quality of life in communities and are associated with reduced stress and lower crime rates.


Because of these benefits, we do not necessarily agree with the use of the term “non-functional” turf and believe firmly that no turf is nonfunctional as it can serve beneficial

purposes in many instances that do not waste water, foster healthier soil, and benefits the community, when placed and maintained appropriately and with a purpose.

Nonetheless, we appreciate that the current version of Senate Bill 5 clarifies where turf can be installed, especially concerning commercial property. We agreed from the onset that planting turf in drought-stricken medians was not necessary, but we had concerns that without clarity there would be other locations where turf serves a significant purposes would be included like under tree canopies to name one example. Additionally, we strongly support the acknowledgment that there are varieties of turf that are native and water efficient. Both changes work to ensure that the scope of the measure better aligns with the intentions of the bill. We are also optimistic about developments with new cultivars of even more efficient turf which are being studied and developed today at universities such as Colorado State.

We want to again thank Senator Roberts for acknowledging our concerns and collaborating with stakeholders to develop Senate Bill 5 in its amended form. For the reasons outlined above, NALP expresses its support for Senate Bill 5.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terence Stovall". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a thin horizontal line.

Terence Stovall

Manager, State and Local Affairs



Date: January 24, 2024

From: Melanie Taylor, CAE
President and CEO
Synthetic Turf Council
2331 Rock Spring Road
Forest Hill, MD 21050

To: Members of the Colorado Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

Subject: Commenting on Reference Amendment on Article 99 Calling for Prohibition of Nonfunctional Turf, Artificial Turf, and Invasive Plant Species

Dear Honorable Chair and Members of the Colorado Senate's Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee,

On behalf of the Synthetic Turf Council (STC), I am writing to express our concern with the unintended consequences Senate Bill 005 – Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation would have for Coloradans if passed in its current form. Contrary to the assumptions made in the legislation around synthetic turf which, we believe lawmakers should more fully consider the benefits of using artificial turf and the functional purpose it serves to achieve the ultimate goal of water conservation. For this reason, we ask that you amend the proposed language to recognize its functional purpose in statute.

Founded in 2002, the STC is a 501(c)6 trade association representing the synthetic turf industry. Our priority is to further educate the general public and promote industry excellence through voluntary guidelines, certifications, and other learning platforms. The STC touches 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.

Synthetic turf provides significant benefits and functionality for communities, the environment, and users alike. As the Senate Committee considers legislation around turf, we request lawmakers to fully consider the following points:

- **Regarding water conservation:** When it comes to greatly reducing water use and reducing water pollution compared to what's needed to support grass alternatives, there are [significant benefits to synthetic turf](#). In fact, one full-size



synthetic turf sports field saves between 500,000 and 1 million gallons of water each year. When it comes to landscape, an average lawn of 1,800 square feet will [save 99,000 gallons of water](#) a year if landscaped with synthetic turf.

- **Regarding reducing 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.
- **Regarding PFAS:** Turf industry manufacturers, as represented by the STC, recognize the concerns related to PFAS in turf and are committed to ensuring their products contain no intentionally-added PFAS constituents.
 - Our organization is committed to ensuring there is no intentionally added PFAS across all points of manufacturing of synthetic turf.

For these reasons and more, we believe the Colorado Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources should reconsider the benefit for and of functional artificial turf local communities across the state of Colorado.

The STC is committed to protecting the environment and currently provides the latest guidance and resources for synthetic turf systems. Our experts are always available to answer questions and provide evidence based resources to reach our common goal.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

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