

Press Release

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Artificial Turf Company Sues to Keep Experts Quiet

Small Non-Profit Sued by International Turf Manufacturer for Organizing a Public Webinar

(Port Washington, NY) Grassroots Environmental Education, a New York-based non-profit environmental health organization, has been named in a lawsuit filed by the Polyloom Corporation of America, manufacturer of artificial turf, to stop the presentation of a public webinar regarding the health and environmental impacts of artificial turf fields. The lawsuit also names four expert speakers who were scheduled to present at the webinar, originally scheduled for this past January.

"I understand that the artificial turf industry is not happy about emerging science showing that these fields are problematic from both a human health and environmental standpoint," says Grassroots Associate Director Doug Wood, who organized the webinar. "But shutting off debate and keeping critical scientific information from the public is not the solution to the problem."

In its promotional outreach for the event, Grassroots had claimed that scientific evidence shows that most artificial turf fields contain PFAS "forever" chemicals, that the fields are major contributors to microplastic pollution, and that they are difficult, if not impossible, to recycle. Polyloom, in its lawsuit, claimed these statements were "false and misleading." In a response letter to Polyloom, Grassroots cited the scientific evidence to support its statements. Polyloom did not respond, but claimed that Grassroots had intentionally interfered with their business by promoting the webinar, despite the fact that none of Grassroots' materials ever mentioned Polyloom or any other turf manufacturer.

Grassroots, along with all four co-defendants, has filed a countersuit in Nassau County, New York, claiming that the Polyloom lawsuit is a "strategic lawsuit against public participation," or SLAPP suit. New York State has adopted strong anti-SLAPP legislation to prevent lawsuits of this type from being successful.

More information is available at the Grassroots website, www.Grassrootsinfo.org