

has no idea. They don't track that at the retail point of sale. They could. They have the authority to do so, but they don't. This is more of a comment than a question. I just wanted to leave that with you. I think you and others and committee members are interested in knowing that. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

In most provinces that now have bans, and most provinces in Canada do have bans on cosmetic pesticide products, the consumer trend line was to see quite a significant decrease in pesticide use. In other words, the legislative process was catching up with public opinion. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

I think the good news in that is that education around pesticide use is happening formally, informally in the media and in other places through horticultural groups or community gardening — all sorts of things in the urban environment. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

I think we will ask the Ministry of Environment to come up with some way to determine what's happening with pesticide sales in British Columbia. If they are able to provide anything that is meaningful, we'll be happy to share that with you. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**B. Bennett (Chair):** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Pearson, for coming before us and representing your organization. Thanks for your presentation. We appreciate it. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**R. Pearson:** Thank you again for the opportunity. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**B. Bennett (Chair):** Our next witness is the National Allied Golf Association. I believe there are three presenters. While the presenters are setting up, let's take about a four-minute recess. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

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The committee recessed from 10:59 a.m. to 11:02 a.m.

[B. Bennett in the chair.]

**B. Bennett (Chair):** Committee, I think we'll reconvene. Not every member is back, but they'll be back shortly. We want to try and stay to the schedule as much as we can. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Maybe you folks were probably not here when my committee introduced themselves earlier, or were you? Were you here? [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**D. Ferne:** Yes, we were here. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**B. Bennett (Chair):** Okay. We can dispense with that, then. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Why don't you folks go ahead and introduce yourselves and then get started. You've got 30 minutes, and you can spend it, really, however you want to. But if you wanted to leave some time at the end for questions, I think that would be appreciated by committee members. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**J. Rousseau:** Well, thank you very much, committee, for allowing us the opportunity to present. We are the National Allied Golf Association, B.C. chapter. We are an umbrella organization of all the golf industry sectors in the province. That includes the golf course owners and operators. It includes the golf course professionals. It includes golf course superintendents. It includes golf course managers. It also includes the players themselves. The Western Canada Turfgrass Association, which I represent, is the education and research body not only for the golf industry but the turf management industry in general. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

So I'm going to let Kris lead us here with a bit of a background on the

economic side of the golf business. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**K. Jonasson:** We've provided everyone with a copy of an economic impact study that was produced and released last year. We can run through the numbers; although, I'm sure that you're all capable of reading. But the purpose of putting that document together was to indicate to the general population that the golf industry is a significant economic player within the province. We contribute somewhere around \$1.8 billion of economic activity, and we employ some 47,000 people around the province of British Columbia. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

We're somewhat unique as a sport in that we're one of the few sports that does not really rely on a tremendous amount of government funding. To a large extent, we build and maintain our own golf courses, mainly as facilities that are either owned and operated by a society or owned and operated by an individual. In the case of some progressive municipalities in the province, owned and operated by a municipality. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

[1105]

You'll see in the presentation that we make reference to areas of the province, like Kimberley, who went through a total reorganization of their economy due to the closure [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

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you'll see in the presentation that we make reference to areas of the province like Kimberley, which went through a total reorganization of their economy due to the closure of some mines and really have reinvented themselves as a tourism destination through a combination of investments in golf facilities for summer recreation and ski facilities for winter recreation.

I think that as the province moves forward, we will have opportunities throughout the province to see areas open up for resource development. And then if they're going to continue, they're going to have to change into something. Providing infrastructure for a community to thrive and grow is something that the golf industry has always participated in and we think is important to the future of the province. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**J. Rousseau:** That presentation that we're bringing to you today was also brought in May for the inaugural Golf Awareness Day that we did. So some of you, most of you, have probably seen that already. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Thank you, Kris, for that introduction to the golf industry. Golf is a massive contributor to B.C.'s economy, as Kris said. B.C.'s golf industry is a longstanding supporter of healthy living and charitable causes. British Columbia's golf courses are conscientious environmental stewards. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

We've already talked about the dollars here, so I'm going to just move on. Hundreds of thousands of British Columbians play millions of rounds of golf at more than 300 golf facilities across the province. There's a golf course in every sector of your constituencies. From our northern borders all the way to the south, east and west, there are a lot of golf courses. A lot of people play golf in this province. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

A quarter of all those rounds in B.C. are played by tourists, including non-local British Columbians and visitors to the province. Golfers spend \$330 million in travel related to golf rounds. So just a little score card there for you. Pardon the pun. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**K. Jonasson:** We're also involved in programs throughout the province to help to get kids more physically active. We're as concerned as everyone is with the overall health of the children in our communities. What you're seeing in that picture is a typical school program that we run. We currently are running it from kindergarten through grade 7. It's an introduction to the sport. It's an opportunity

for us to come into the school and work with the kids. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

I think what's instructive there is that we are using new and innovative ways of introducing the game. What you see there is a full gymnasium of children all participating in an activity at the same time. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

I think it also should be said that we do actually have some studies that relate to the playing of the sport of golf and the overall health of the community. There was a major study done, coincidentally in Sweden as well, that followed a half a million golfers for 20 years and did in fact prove that, on average, golfers live about five years longer than the general population. That came as quite a shock to a lot of people. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Surprisingly — or not so surprisingly — the more golf you play, the better your chances are of having a long life. Part of that has to do with the fact that better golfers and people that play a lot generally tend to walk. They do carry their clubs. Walking and carrying clubs burns a lot of calories. That's a great message to get out to kids, but it's also a great message to get out to our seniors. I think everybody has concerns with the impending health care costs and what's facing us in the future, and we think that getting people more physically active is one of the things that we should all be looking at. Certainly, golf wants to contribute in that area. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

[1110]

**J. Rousseau:** Golfers do live longer. I guess, with my game, I should probably already be dead, then, if we extrapolate that the other way. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Golf, by participation, is the most popular sport in Canada — 15 percent more popular than hockey even. Golf courses.... Back to a little bit of the [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

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probably already be dead, then, if we extrapolate that the other way.

So golf, by participation, is the most popular sport in Canada — 15 percent more popular than hockey, even. Golf courses — back to the little bit of the dollar figures here — \$4.7 billion. Golf courses and driving ranges generated gross revenues of \$4.7 billion in 2008. That's more than skiing, health and fitness centres and amusement parks combined. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

What we're really here to talk about, obviously, today is how a potential pesticide ban would affect the golf industry. We just wanted to lay that out a little bit so that you know what we are before we get into that. Frankly, the golf industry in B.C. is opposed to further restrictive legislation dealing with pesticides. We do not distinguish between cosmetic pesticides and non-cosmetic. These products are all registered at Health Canada, not necessarily by use. These active ingredients span different uses, whether it's agriculture, landscape industry, horticulture, etc. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

We support and are confident in Health Canada's requirements to register pesticides. We also support an ongoing and dynamic evaluation system at Health Canada. We expect that to not be stagnant. We expect it to continue to develop as the technology gets better, and we do appreciate their re-evaluation process of chemicals and active ingredients that are already registered. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

We would note that in the ornamental sector, which golf is only a very small percentage of — under half a percent — the ornamental sector is already a small percentage of pesticides being used in this country when we compare to agriculture or forestry. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

We do have programs in place in the golf industry over and above legislation. For example, in B.C. we have the IPM Act. It came in, in 2003.

Audubon has a program for golf, specifically. It's called cooperative sanctuary program for golf courses. That is a volunteer program to further enhance environmental stewardship on golf courses. In B.C. we currently have nine courses certified through Audubon, and dozens more are in the process of being certified.

[DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

They're not the only program that's out there. There are a couple of others. Green Links is one, and there's a new one coming out of the U.K. called GEO that we're quite interested in, as well. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Golf course superintendents focus on turf and wildlife preservation techniques based in sound science. We're trained in soil chemistry, fertility, and maintenance practices in accredited diploma programs at B.C. secondary institutions and others. Kwantlen University in Langley has got a great horticulture program. Olds College in Alberta, Guelph university in Ontario and several others have excellent horticulture management programs. So we're talking about trained individuals here. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

The golf industry collectively allocates significant funds toward research programs. So our own programs are dynamic as well. We're not just sort of sitting on our hands, so to speak. In fact, I think a lot of our goals are the same as many of the presenters you've seen earlier, in that IPM, I guess in it's ideal end point, would be zero pesticides. IPM encourages us to minimize their use and avoid their use, if at all possible. We support IPM as well. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

I don't think I need to talk too much more about integrated pest management. We call it plant management. You've heard a lot about that already. Feel free to jump in if there are questions on that. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

I'm not sure where we're at with time, Mr. Bennett. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**B. Bennett (Chair):** You are about halfway through your half-hour increment, so you can.... [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

**J. Rousseau:** I'll show you the photos that we brought to just give you an idea of what happens. A lot of our members will tell me this, and I know from experience — I'm a former golf course superintendent — nobody wants to put this stuff down if we don't have to. It's necessary for our business. We've got studies to show that as well, actually — that non-use of synthetic chemicals won't allow our business to continue. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

[1115]

Here's a photo of a golf course I used to work at, actually. These are the kind of things that can happen to a golf course. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

We are [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

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chemicals won't allow our business to continue. And here's a photo of a golf course I used to work at, actually. What happens.... These are the kinds of things that can happen to a golf course.

We are in a situation where, due to the nature of golf, we can be more susceptible to turf grass diseases that the average home lawn or commercial landscape might not be — in particular, fungus or fungi. In Canada, snow mould is a big concern, especially in the western province of B.C. here. We've got a lot of problems with what we call pink snow mould. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

But conversely, we don't actually have a lot of weed problems. I think there's a public perception out there when you see a green golf course that, you know, a lot of things go on. That's not necessarily true. In fact — and I don't know too many golf courses that are completely weed-free — we have quite a high tolerance for that, and due to the nature of back to the lower mowing heights of greens, that takes care of a lot of the weed problems. They just won't survive at

that height of cut. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

How integrated pest management relates to the golf business. We have a lot of cultural practices that we use. I don't mean to, probably, get into all of them, but again it comes down to pesticides being used as a last resort. So if you're a golfer and you're out there, and there are holes punched in the greens in the fall, that's one of our cultural practices. If you see sand on the greens or the fairways, that's another one, again, just to reinforce the notion that these pesticides are a last resort. Having said that, these are federally approved products sprayed by accredited and certified personnel. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Another photo of the situation where a golf course was devastated pretty badly.... This obviously is a negative effect to the business. I would also add or reiterate what we heard earlier. Pesticides are very expensive to our golf courses. We do not make more money by spraying more pesticides. In fact, we're encouraged to apply less to try and save as much money as possible. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Again, here's a unique example. A golf course in the Okanagan was going to be under construction. We have a lot of problems throughout the winter, and this is what we see often in the spring if it's a bad winter. This area wasn't treated, so it's a unique example or a rare example of a situation where we can see what would happen without these products. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

These next two slides are the same thing. This is a golf course tee box. It's basically unplayable. It's unfit to play. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Some of the feel-good stuff. Again, we're not standing around. I guess we are here, but we're not sitting on our hands. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

These are some Kwantlen students. We're out researching and learning about improving our operations as much as we can to reduce pesticide use as much as possible. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

This is our research committee chair. He's got a master of science from the University of British Columbia. He's also a golf course superintendent in Riverway. This is just an example that I wanted to show everyone of the qualified individuals in our industry that we're talking about. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

This is a research centre in Washington. Part of what I do is liaise with allied groups across Canada and in the U.S. A lot of money is spent on turf grass research to try and improve the species of grass themselves — less susceptible cultivars of grass, less fertilizer or water needed, grasses that can stand up better to the traffic and so forth. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Another example of some environmentally friendly activities on a golf course. This is the Penticton Golf and Country Club. The crew here are holding up some painted turtles that they found in one of the sand traps. That sand trap is now protected. Again, just another example of IPM and the environmental stewardship that goes on on golf courses in B.C. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

Bear Mountain — here's another example. Again, public perception, I think, is quite a bit different than what we actually see on a golf course. For example, it's 160 acres. A hundred acres, approximately, would be managed or less. There's a quite a large area of most golf courses that aren't managed at all. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

[1120]

Just another example of some cool stuff coming down the pike — some really neat robotic mowers electrically powered [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]

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So just another example of some cool stuff coming down the pike: some really neat robotic mowers, electrically powered, again, to get closer to our goal of sustainability in the golf business. That's what it all about in the end. [DRAFT TRANSCRIPT ONLY]