



February 27, 2023

Dear Senator:

As the Executive Director of the Georgia Urban Agriculture Council, I am proud to work on behalf of our 500 member companies involved in sod production, landscape management, and affiliated agribusinesses. **We request your support for the LEAF Act, SB 145, to protect the use of gasoline powered leaf blowers for the landscape industry as well as all property maintenance businesses and citizens.**

This is another important agricultural issue and in need of statewide uniformity. For decades, agriculture has benefitted from statewide preemption for outdoor irrigation, fertilizer use, and pesticide applications. The ability to use leaf blowers and other tools is another essential element to these businesses and property owners. A patchwork quilt of municipal regulations would be unworkable.

A 2021 national survey showed **switching from gasoline-powered equipment to battery operated would, on average, impact a landscape company 30% in higher costs for equipment and labor.** Recent advancements in battery technology have accelerated product growth, but today's battery technology is very limited in duration of use, recharge times, and life cycle. The average landscape professional would require dozens of high-power batteries every day to achieve necessary power demand, resulting in an upfront battery cost exceeding \$10,500 (California data) and would need to be replaced approximately every 3 years on average. In addition, lithium-ion batteries have a propensity to catch fire and must be managed for such risks.

I request your support for **Senate Bill 145** to help ensure our Georgia businesses can maintain access and use to the tools needed to serve the landscape, sports fields, parks and more as our industry works to keep Georgia beautiful. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mary Kay Woodworth
Executive Director, Georgia Urban Ag Council (UAC)
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The following organizations also support SB 145:

- Georgia Chamber of Commerce
- Georgia Agribusiness Council
- Georgia Farm Bureau
- Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association
- Georgia Green Industry Association
- Georgia Pest Control Association
- National Association of Landscape Professionals

Georgia Urban Ag Council

Greener. Smarter. Stronger.

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