

Calif. studying health effects of artificial turf

By Melody Gutierrez, San Francisco Chronicle

SACRAMENTO – California officials have authorized spending \$2.9 million to study the health effects of using recycled tire pieces on artificial turf fields, hoping to put to rest a simmering debate over their safety.

But even as the health effects are studied, the state will dole out millions of dollars in subsidies to schools and cities so that they can install public playgrounds and fields using the materials in question.

“I think it’s irresponsible,” said Sen. Jerry Hill, D-San Mateo, who authored legislation that would have stopped the grant program while the state conducted the study.

Hill’s bill was killed amid fierce lobbying from well-funded opponents in the tire recycling industry as well as labor interests. The groups spent nearly \$300,000 for lobbying on Hill’s bill and other legislation during the first three months of the year, according to filings with the secretary of state.

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