TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
H. 868 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A GRANT PROGRAM FOR LOW NOISE, LOW EMISSIONS
LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT
BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND
AGRICULTURE
OCTOBER 13, 2021

The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) is a professional association of over 25,000 physicians, residents, and medical students across all clinical disciplines, organizations, and practice settings. The Medical Society is committed to advocating on behalf of patients, to give them a better health care system, and on behalf of physicians, to help them provide the best care possible. To that end, the MMS wishes to be recorded in support of H.868, An Act to establish a grant program for low noise, low emissions landscape maintenance equipment.

The MMS recognizes that the noise, particulate matter, and other toxic emissions of gasoline-powered lawn and garden equipment pose a risk to workers and the public, especially vulnerable populations such as children.¹ Consistent with the American Medical Association, the MMS recognizes noise pollution as a public health hazard, with respect to hearing loss, and supports initiatives to increase awareness of the health risks of loud noise exposure. The MMS urges the maximum feasible reduction of all forms of air pollution, including particulates, gases, toxicants, irritants, smog formers, and other biologically and chemically active pollutants. Finally, the MMS acknowledges the increased risk of adverse health to workers and general public from gas-powered leaf blowers including hearing loss and cardiopulmonary disease.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, “Noise pollution adversely affects the lives of millions of people. Studies have shown that there are direct links between noise and health. Problems related to noise include stress related illnesses, high blood pressure, speech interference, hearing loss, sleep disruption, and lost productivity. Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) is the most common and often discussed health effect, but research has shown that exposure to constant or high levels of noise can cause countless adverse health effects.”²

For these reasons, the MMS urges the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture to report H.868 out of committee favorably.