

## Hey Joe, say it ain't so!

**W**hatever you think of the guy, Joe Lieberman is going to be around a while, and it doesn't look like he's going to change his mind when it comes to the chemical application industry.

U.S. Senator Lieberman (D-CT) is either going to be the next vice president of this country or he's going to remain the senator from Connecticut where, I've been informed, he's a shoo-in for another term if he and Al Gore fail to beat the Republicans in the presidential election. I don't know which to hope for because he hasn't been a friend to the lawn/landscape application industry.

When Gore announced Lieberman as his running mate, the press positively cooed. Both the print media and the network talking heads competed to paint the selection in glowing terms. Judged within the context of politics, it was clever. Even so, leave me out of this mini-lovefest.

Call me cynical but my experience tells me that a politician's number one priority is to get elected. Then, once in office, it becomes staying in office or advancing to a higher office. Lieberman is a politician and a pretty darn good one. He's been at it long enough, starting in 1970 as a state senator in Connecticut.

### A look to the past

As a U.S. senator, the former Connecticut attorney general kept busy with environmental and consumer protection issues, some of which brought him national attention, some of which didn't. That's because some of the issues he promoted were laudable — like when he spoke out against filthy and violent song lyrics in some of our popular music. But some were off base.

Some of us remember back to the early 1990s when

Sen. Lieberman, during his first term on Capitol Hill, worked like the dickens to stymie the chemical lawn application industry. Among those who remember it best is a group of about 15 or 20 lawn care operators who boarded a bus on a dark cold Connecticut morning for a long bus ride to Washington, D.C.

Two days later, they met with the senator to discuss the legislation. The applicators regarded the proposal (an amendment to a 1986 "right-to-know" act) as unneeded and potentially devastating to their livelihoods. They strongly objected to provisions requiring advanced written prenotifications to anyone even remotely located in the vicinity of a turf application.

"He was cordial," recalled Paul McDonough of that February 1992 meeting. "He (Lieberman) said that he would look into our concerns. That's the last I heard of it."

McDonough lived in Connecticut then and helped organize the bus trip. He now lives in Ohio and works for LESCO.

Richard Tice, another of the bus riders, remains active in Connecticut's Green Industry and involved in its politics as director of the Environmental Industries Council. Tice says he has no reason to believe Lieberman has softened his stand on specialty chemicals.

The senator from Connecticut, it seems, is not likely to take pesticides off of his agenda whether he becomes vice president or remains a senator.

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U.S. Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman

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