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March 27, 2013

Ms. Beth Patrino
Committee Administrator
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE, Room 347
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: HB 3364, Relating to integrated pest management.

Dear Chair Witt and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning House Bill 3364, the plan for agency coordination for Oregon's State IPM policy.

I believe that passing HB 3364 is very important for Oregon for many reasons:

While we understand many of the dangers of pesticides, unfortunately we are only now beginning to understand some of the more subtle and insidious damage they can inflict, not only on people but on wildlife and ecosystems. History is replete with examples where dangerous substances were used before their dangers were known, resulting in tremendous damage and suffering.

Data shows that the use of pesticides is increasing yearly, creating a cycle of plant and pest resistance and more chemicals applied that increases risks to human health, soil quality, and streams.

Scientific studies are showing links between pesticide exposure and many kinds of health problems, not just cancer but also lipid profiles, hormone disorders, cardiovascular incidents and possibly even obesity. But even the studies that are being done typically examine only one pesticide at a time; meanwhile, "tank mixes" of pesticides are routinely applied. The few studies that have looked at combinations of pesticides have indeed found that they can act synergistically, i.e., the damage they inflict may be more than the sum of the damage from the individual components.

We know that pregnant women, children and older people are more susceptible than others to damage from pesticide exposure. There are also individuals who have inherited diseases such as porphyria that make them much more susceptible to the damaging impacts of pesticides. The only way they can protect themselves is through knowledge of what kinds of pesticides are being applied so they can avoid unintentional exposure.

As a former state employee who worked in a state-owned building, I know that the Department of Administrative Services, in their maintenance of public buildings and grounds, routinely uses pesticides regardless of the severity of the problem they are addressing. Pesticides are routinely sprayed around buildings according to a schedule, exposing both state employees and an unwitting public to potential health risks, just to kill a handful of weeds that could be hand-pulled in minutes.

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The State should adopt as policy the axiom that guides physicians: First, do no harm!

Integrated pest management is science-based, it is a smart and effective use of pesticides so that chemicals are not overused, wasted or used inappropriately. Oregon State University is one of the nation's premier research institutions for pest management and this bill will link OSU's research, science and leadership with our state agency effectiveness.

Further, I believe that notice to the public is absolutely essential when government is using substances with potentially damaging impacts to its citizens. I believe this to be a basic human right that individuals have with respect to their government.

Finally, as pointed out by the Eugene Register-Guard in its editorial yesterday, chemical pesticides are expensive, without even accounting for the adverse health consequences. Other states have achieved significant savings following adoption of integrated pest management approaches. Oregon cannot afford to continue the current level of pesticide use by state agencies.

Please pass this bill. It will protect the budget of Oregon, the citizens of Oregon, and the future citizens of Oregon.

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Roberta J. Lindberg

Roberta J. Lindberg
Lane County resident

RJL:bl