

December 8, 2014

Dear Chair Dembrow and Senate Committee members:

I would like to take the time to thank you for meeting again on the subject of protecting our water and human life from herbicides/pesticides. We met at the very first hearing that was held regarding the October 16th herbicidal spray incident. I told you at that time that we the people have lost faith in our government. Here is why.

I have been respectful and spoken truthfully when discussing the herbicidal issue from the beginning. My neighbors and I have no hidden agenda. I have attempted to contact and work with our legislators in our own county - Senator Kruse, Representative Kreiger. We have met four times at public hearings with our County Commissioners with ideas on how to remedy the problems associated with aerial spraying. We were shocked to learn that our Commissioners and our Senator and Representative met privately with Oregonians for Food and Shelter. Their lobbyist suggested that we have some kind of hidden agenda. This is not fair. We have always presented our point of view in public because that is the democratic way. We don't meet behind closed doors to spread mistruths.

We were asked by you to come back to Salem in December, because you wanted to hear from us, the ones sprayed. We hear that the lobbyists from timber and chemical companies want you and other legislators to think that our experience was just a one-time accident, a mistake by a bad applicator. That is not true. There have been problems like this before in our county and throughout the entire coastal region. A recent article on Oregon Public Broadcasting pointed out a 2014 forestry pesticide trespass in Tiller, Douglas County.

We were directly sprayed, ignored by our local, county, and state governments. No investigation was started in Gold Beach until 7 days later. We were not informed of what was sprayed for six months and unable to get adequate health care. We in Gold Beach have been vilified by our own county and state agencies, and denied our rights under the constitution.

These sprays are causing serious health issues, poisoning our water, killing our pets/ livestock, and killing fish/wildlife. Yes, there are regulations but how do regulations work if the system is broken or wrong? The aerial application in Tiller was monitored and they still were poisoned by drift in so called perfect conditions; we in Gold Beach were not monitored and we were also poisoned.

Oregonians around the state need your help to protect public health. We ask you to support larger buffer zones, free and timely public notification, protection of water, and monitors on all sites. There are alternatives to aerial spraying—how about hand spraying that could create jobs?

I am pro-timber. I am a logger's daughter and have worked in these woods. I know that we need the timber industry. Our health and property rights are important. Please do what is right in the 2015 legislature. We need protection from aerial pesticide sprays now because our health and property are at risk.

Sincerely,

Kathyrn Rickard, on behalf of Kathyrn and Eric Rickard