



Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 892

March 22, 2017

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Chris Hewitt

Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony on Senate Bill 892. ONA represents 15,000 registered nurses providing care in nearly every setting across the state. Oregon's nurses have a robust history of supporting policies that serve to improve public health as well as transparency in agricultural and industrial practices that can have adverse potential consequences for our communities.

The practice of aerial pesticide spraying has been shown to cause serious illness for many patients in regions throughout our state. Unintended human exposure to pesticides has been linked to chronic diseases such as different types of cancers, diabetes, birth defects, and other reproductive disorders.¹ Aerial spraying has also resulted in negative impacts on our vital recreational and fishing industries due to harmful chemical drift to unintended areas. Illness is caused not only by direct spray but by drift of the chemicals carried by wind and fog to adjacent land. This contaminates the streams we fish from, the watersheds we drink from, the soil we grow in and the wildlife our communities rely upon for nutrition.

Consequently, a coalition of Lincoln County nurse leaders have worked to qualify Ballot Measure 21-177 for the May 2017 election, which would outright prohibit the practice of aerial pesticide spraying within the county's forest lands. As 90% of Lincoln County is forest zoning today, most of it being private industrial land, this measure has been proposed out of an urgent need to mitigate the detrimental effect that pesticides are having on health outcomes in the community. ONA has enthusiastically endorsed this measure and stands in support of meaningful efforts to stem the damaging public health costs that result from aerial spraying.

As such, Senate Bill 892 represents another important step toward increasing accountability related to aerial pesticide spraying. By requiring entities to file notice with the State Forestry Department of proposed aerial application of pesticides on privately- owned forestland and enabling free public access to review filings, SB 892 will help to expand overall public awareness of this practice and ensure that it is executed more safely moving forward.

ONA urges your support for **SB 892**.

¹ "Pesticides and human chronic diseases: Evidences, mechanisms, and perspectives" *Toxicology and Applied Pharmacology*. Vol. 268, Issue 2. 15 April 2013. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0041008X13000549>.