

Watts Remy

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To: SENR Exhibits
Subject: SB853

March 26, 2018

To the ***Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources:***

I am writing to you as president of Pollinator Project Rogue Valley, a small volunteer-run nonprofit in S OR.

I hope you have been hearing about the precipitous decline of insects worldwide. Numerous studies have been published about their staggering rate of disappearance. Just a few months ago, a published review of 73 studies concluded that "pollution from pesticides" is one of the primary causes. It's hard to imagine, but over 40% of all insects have disappeared over the last 10 years, and we are on track to continue to lose them at the rate of 2.5% annually.

Oregon is renowned for its bounty of fruits and vegetables. What will farmers do this year and the next and the next as the insects that pollinate our crops disappear? Without pollination, we have no cherries and blueberries, no squash and pumpkins, no alfalfa and carrots. It is already happening - this year there has been a major shortage of honey bees to pollinate the almond orchards.

Neonicotinoids have been around since the early 90's, and are the most widely used insecticides in the world.

Neonics are systemic, meaning they can't be washed off the plant or fruit or vegetable. The neonic actually gets into the cells of the plants, making the plant toxic for insects. These systemic pesticides get into the pollen and nectar of the plant, and because the neonics remain in the plant for months and sometimes years, when the bees and butterflies sip from the flowers they are ingesting the poison and also, in the case of bees, taking the toxic pollen and nectar back to their hive and nest.

People use neonics to try to get rid of pests like aphids, or white flies, but end up killing the good insects.

And it is not just the bees and butterflies. Neonics are also very harmful to birds. Birds can become disoriented, or even worse, die after being exposed to neonics.

Because neonics are water-soluble, they end up in streams and rivers. So, insects such as mayflies and caddisflies are affected, and therefore fish, like trout, who depend on those insects for food, will have fewer insects to eat. With fewer insects there will be fewer fish - which means fewer fish for people to eat. Unfortunately, testing is finding neonics in our streams in the Rogue Valley.

Oregon is renowned for its outdoor recreational opportunities. Would our tourism industry decline if we no longer have birds to watch and fish to fish?

I am a member of the Bellview Grange in Ashland, part of the Oregon State Grange system. In 2017, the Bellview Grange wrote a resolution that was adopted by the State Grange and its 4,000 members, and subsequently included in the Agricultural Policy of the National Grange. Here is the statement in the [National Grange Policy](#) that relates to these bills: "misuse via over-the-counter products has resulted in their increasing presence in water and wetlands. Their toxic effect on bee populations has reached the point where we feel it is time to consider designating Neonics as a restricted use pesticide."

Please pass SB 853 to protect insects, fish, birds, and people.
Consumers who lack the proper training and a license and must no longer be able to purchase products that contain neonicotinoids.
Farmworkers must no longer be exposed to chlorpyrifos, a known neurotoxin, and children should be able to eat fruits and vegetable every day without concern for their health.

The leaders of many cities and countries have already taken this step. It is time for the Oregon Legislative Assembly to vote yes on this bill.

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