



# Clatsop County

## Board of Commissioners

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March 19, 2019

House Committee on Agriculture and Land Use  
900 Court St. NE  
Room 347  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Support for Oregon SB 853 and HB 3058- Ban on Chlorpyrifos and Restrictions for Neonicotinoids

Dear Chairs Clem and Dembrow, and Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, and House Committee on Agriculture and Land Use:

On March 13, 2019, the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners voted to support SB 853 and HB 3058. These two bills, if passed, ban the use of chlorpyrifos, as well as classify neonicotinoid pesticides as “restricted use” in Oregon allowing only those trained to be able to use them. In addition, SB 853 supports Oregonians who use pesticides in their business or profession to receive training and licensing from the Oregon Department of Agriculture by reducing the licensing fee.

Clatsop County, a coastal and river community, cares about safe water for all residents, visitors, businesses and wildlife. The Board of Commissioners chose to support these bills as an action to protect pollinators, wildlife and children. Clatsop County wants to protect public health and expects our government to do all that it can to keep Oregon’s food systems viable and our drinking water safe. It is necessary to end the sales and uses of chlorpyrifos in Oregon to protect the safety of drinking water and our food system. According to the US EPA, there is no safe level of exposure to this potent neurotoxin. In fact, after many years of research, chlorpyrifos were banned for use in residential settings in 2001. Exposure during pregnancy may harm the development of children and could cause children to have adverse health outcomes from the exposure of chlorpyrifos. In 2016, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a human health assessment that proposed to revoke all tolerances for chlorpyrifos, which included consumption exposure through residues on food and contaminated water. Food testing has shown that chlorpyrifos is detectable at unsafe levels for children. Due to changes on the national level between 2016 and today, it is now up to the state of Oregon to put protections in place for its citizens.

Clatsop County also supports classifying neonicotinoids as a restricted use pesticide. Oregon already lists hundreds of pesticides as restricted use products due to their toxicity to the environment or to humans. Adding neonicotinoids to the list of restricted pesticides does not take these tools out of the toolbox; they can still be purchased and used by trained and licensed pesticide applicators. It makes sense to ensure that applicators are licensed because neonicotinoids are a class of synthetic, neurotoxic pesticides that persist in the environment and are highly toxic to bees, beneficial insects, fish and birds. Even years after an application, neonicotinoids can kill bees or damage their ability to forage for food or find their way back to the hive.

Oregon needs to do all it can to protect bees. Bees support Oregon agriculture and are responsible for one in every three bites of food we eat. We must be concerned that these beneficial insects are declining

at unsustainable rates.<sup>1</sup> In 2014, a comprehensive review of more than 1,121 peer-reviewed studies released by the Task Force on Systemic Pesticides- a group of global, independent scientists- confirmed neonics are a key factor in bee declines and are harming beneficial organisms essential to functional ecosystems and food production, including soil microbes, butterflies, earthworms, reptiles, and birds. The Task Force called for immediate regulatory action to restrict neonicotinoids.<sup>2</sup> Scientists recognize that neonicotinoids represent a major worldwide threat to biodiversity and ecosystems.<sup>3</sup>

Clatsop County Commissioners are endorsing HB3058 and SB 853, which would ban chlorpyrifos and make neonicotinoids only available to those trained and licensed to use them. These bills would help protect the food system, the agricultural economy and Oregon's environment. Passing these bills is the right thing to do and now is the right time.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Sullivan  
Clatsop County Board of Commissioners

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<sup>1</sup> Pollinator Partnership. (2019). About Pollinators. Pollinator Partnership. Retrieved from <https://pollinator.org/pollinators#fn>

<sup>2</sup> Van de Sluijs, J.P. et al. Conclusions of the Worldwide Integrated Assessment on the risks of neonicotinoids and fipronil to biodiversity and ecosystem functioning. Environ.Sci.Pollut.Res. (2014).doi:10.1007/s11356-014-32295

<sup>3</sup> International Unioned for Conservation of Nature. (2017, September 20). Severe threats to biodiversity from neonicotinoid pesticides revealed in latest scientific review.ICUN. Retrieved from <https://www.iucn.org/news/secretariat/201709/severe-threats-biodiversity-neonicotinoid-pesticides-revealed-latest-scientific-review>