



March 26, 2019

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

RE: SB 853 – **OPPOSED**

Chair Dembrow and Committee,

My name is Marie Bowers and I am fifth generation farmer in Linn & Lane Counties. We primarily grow grass seed with a variety of other seed crop. My family takes great pride in being responsible stewards of the land and the soil that grows our crops. We have done so sustainably for over 100 years. We live on the same land and drink the water that's filtered through the soil.

I am **opposed to SB 853**, the ban on Chlorpyrifos and the move to make neonicotinoids restricted use.

Insecticide use increased on our farm after 2009. With the loss of field burning as a pest management tool we replaced it with another, in this case chlorpyrifos. To remain sustainable, we need to keep as many tools in our toolbox as possible.

Chlorpyrifos is strictly regulated and requires a pesticide applicator license for purchase. It is one of the most effective insecticides available. This allows for us to go over the field once rather than multiple times with less effective tools; reducing our soil compaction and carbon footprint.

I am a licensed pesticide applicator and I take that privilege very seriously. This means I read the label and do not violate it. Like most applicators, I am the rule, not the exception.

As a new mom I too am concerned about the potential negative health effects on humans. However, when used as directed according to the label including using the proper protection as directed by the label, the risk is minimal. This gives me confidence to raise my baby in the middle of a grass seed field and drink the water, just as my family has done for over 100 years.

Neonicotinoids are also a vital part to public health and should not have a restricted use label. Considering dogs are a person's best friend, they should be able to be treated for fleas without requiring their owner to have a license. They are also used to control bed bugs. It's a matter of public health and when used as directed by law pollinators are safe.

They are also used in seed treatments, so we do not have to spray fields later. This is a more targeted option rather than broadly spraying an insecticide and saves us a trip over the field.



Honey bees are a vital part to our farm and they pollinate our meadowfoam. Communication is key with our beekeeper so that we make sure the bees are healthy and happy. Oregon State publishes a booklet and phone app that helps us ensure we are being responsible applicators around pollinators.

Taking away tools from farmers without offering viable alternatives is a quick way to make farms unsustainable.

Please OPPOSE SB 853.