



March 24, 2019

To: Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources  
ATTN: Chair Senator Michael Dembrow, Vice-Chair Senator Alan Olsen, and Members of the Committee  
Re: Written testimony SB 853

The Oregon Organic Coalition, and our represented members, supports SB 853 and urges the House Committee and our elected Representatives, to pass this bill out of committee.

Oregon Organic Coalition supports SB 853, banning the use of chlorpyrifos, a toxic nerve agent pesticide proven to cause brain damage in children, contaminate waterways and harm wildlife. This bill would also restrict the use of bee-killing neonicotinoids to licensed professionals only, thus removing them from store shelves.

After years of study, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency concluded that **chlorpyrifos is unsafe at any detectable level** and was set to ban it in 2017. Unfortunately, the Trump Administration reversed that decision and the issue remains tied up in the courts. Oregon can do better.

We are coordinating a strong coalition of organizations and businesses to support this bill addressing the harms caused by two pesticides that are the target of restrictions in other states and countries around the world. Members of the Oregon Organic Coalition recognize the importance of protecting Oregonians, our agricultural lands, the pristine environment for which Oregon is known and loved, and the health of the public from the negative impacts that these two pesticides have on all these incredible resources.

The Oregon bills will **ban the use of chlorpyrifos**, a toxic nerve agent pesticide proven to cause brain damage in children, contaminate waterways and harm wildlife. The bills will also **restrict the use of bee-killing neonicotinoids** to licensed professionals only, thus removing them from store shelves in grocery, hardware and garden stores. Neonicotinoids have been associated with worsening declines of bees and other pollinators. Neonicotinoids also harm fish, birds and soil organisms. The European Union and states including Maryland and Connecticut have banned or restricted neonicotinoids.

*SB 853 would provide much needed protections to Oregon's children, farm workers and wildlife.*

*I wish these comments to be submitted as testimony for public hearing.*

Stacy Ann Kraker,

President, Oregon Organic Coalition

*The Oregon Organic Coalition (OOC) is a trade support organization, working to advance the development and growth of the organic industry and community in Oregon. The OOC represents volunteer stakeholders--farmers, wholesalers, processors, organic certifiers, scientists, consumers and retailers. We lead promotional activities and advocate for state policy to support and grow Oregon's organic trade.*

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Advancing the development and growth of the organic industry and community  
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## **SB 853**

A growing body of scientific study shows threats from several commonly used pesticides to human health, water quality, aquatic species, pollinators, and the biodiversity upon which we all depend.<sup>i</sup> While ensuring state agencies are upholding their responsibility to protect the public, we must pursue common sense solutions that also protect responsible businesses, farmers, schools, and workers. SB 853 also contains provisions to make it easier to obtain the training and certification by cutting the costs of applicator licenses in Oregon by half. The bill could pay for itself by potentially offsetting its costs through a fee increase paid by chemical manufacturers to register their products in Oregon.

### **Neonicotinoids**

Neonicotinoids (“neonics”) are a class of synthetically created neurotoxic pesticides widely used for domestic pest control and on a broad range of food, energy, and ornamental crops. They are highly toxic to insects, pollinators, and freshwater invertebrates, posing threats to water quality, fish, and birds. Neonics are highly persistent in soils, wildflowers, streams and lakes.<sup>ii</sup> After 242 scientists from around the world cited an “immediate need for national and international agreements to greatly restrict their use”, the European Union recently banned the outdoor use of three neonics.<sup>iii</sup> Oregon currently requires certification and training in order to buy, sell, or disseminate over 500 restricted use pesticides, yet none of the neonics are included on the list. SB 853 would add neonics to the list of restricted use pesticides.

### **Chlorpyrifos**

Chlorpyrifos is a widely used organophosphate insecticide tied to development disorders in children that is harmful for humans to touch, inhale or eat.<sup>iv</sup> It acts as a nerve agent, attacking chemical pathways in the body creating a breakdown in the ability of nerves to communicate and function.<sup>v</sup> The United States Environmental Protection Agency under Scott Pruitt recently refused to finalize a court ordered national ban on Chlorpyrifos, necessitating action at the state level.<sup>vi</sup> To protect the health of farmworkers, to safeguard our food supply, and to protect our environment, we urge Oregon to join Hawaii in passing the statewide ban on Chlorpyrifos found in SB 853.

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<sup>i</sup> The Xerces Society. “Scientists Urge Action to Protect Waters from Neonicotinoid Insecticides”. 3/13/18. Lipton, Eric. *New York Times*. “Court Orders E.P.A. to Ban Chlorpyrifos, Pesticide Tied to Children’s Health Problems”. 8/9/18.

<sup>ii</sup> Goulson, Dave and 232 Signatories. *Science Magazine*. “Neonicotinoids: An open letter to policy makers and regulators”. 6/1/18

<sup>iii</sup> Butler, Declan. *Nature*. “Scientists hail European ban on bee-harming pesticides”. 4/27/18.

<sup>iv</sup> National Pesticide Information Center. Chlorpyrifos General Fact Sheet. 4/10.

<sup>v</sup> Cuthbert, Lori. *National Geographic*. “EPA Must Ban Dangerous Insecticide”. 8/10/2018

<sup>vi</sup> National Resources Defense Council. “Hawaii Bans Use of Toxic Pesticide Chlorpyrifos” 6/13/18.