



February 11th, 2020

House Committee on Health Care
Oregon Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: HB 4109, The Healthy Kids and Farmworkers Act

Chair Salinas and Honored Members of the House Committee on Health Care,

On behalf of over 80,000 members across the state of Oregon, I submit this testimony in support of HB 4109 and urge you to vote “do pass” to move this critical bill to the floor of the House.

There is no room for doubt that chlorpyrifos is a parlous threat to Oregonians. Research clearly shows the damage it causes to the brains of children¹, and indicates strong links to infertility, cancer, respiratory diseases, developmental disorders and more². To blanket ourselves with a substance designed for chemical warfare in World War II is an act of self-destruction; one we would and could not undertake even in warfare today. Already banned from use in our homes over 20 years ago, the EPA halted their effort to phase chlorpyrifos out in 2016. In the face of federal inaction, it is incumbent upon us to protect ourselves.

HB 4109 is the perfect vehicle to accomplish this. While placing immediate restrictions on aerial spraying within 300 feet of schools, it provides over a year to phase out use of chlorpyrifos on crops, giving farmers time to adjust to safer methods of pest control. It also immediately strengthens protection for farmworkers, who stand on the front line of risk and suffer most from our inaction³. Finally, it provides crucial protection for pollinators like bees and butterflies, whose declining numbers place our food supply, our environment, and our people at more risk every day.

We have known for 20 years that there are no safe levels of exposure to this extremely neurotoxic chemical. We can and must take immediate action. Your support will protect hundreds of thousands of people in our state, as well as the ecosystem that makes Oregon a beautiful and healthy place to live.

Sincerely,

Jessica L. Beckett
Conservation & Political Director
Sierra Club, Oregon Chapter

¹ [“Children’s Exposure to Chlorpyrifos and Parathion in an Agricultural Community in Central Washington State.”](#) National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

² [“Rotenberg, Joshua S., and Jonathan Newmark. “Nerve Agent Attacks on Children: Diagnosis and Management.”](#) Pediatrics, American Academy of Pediatrics, 1 Sept. 2003

³ Morones, Alyssa, and Alyssa Morones. [“Pesticide Continues to Put Farmworkers and Fetuses in Harm’s Way.”](#) California Health Report, California Health Report, 8 Sept. 2017