



CENTER FOR FOOD SAFETY

February 20, 2020

Re: Support for HB4109 to Phase Out Chlorpyrifos in Oregon

Dear Chair Dembrow and the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

Center for Food Safety, a national nonprofit with over 950,000 members and supporters, including thousands in Oregon, strongly supports HB4109 and **urges this committee to vote yes on the measure and issue a “do pass” recommendation.** The science on chlorpyrifos is crystal clear: chlorpyrifos is known to harm kids’ brains. Chlorpyrifos is linked to infertility, diabetes, respiratory diseases, developmental disorders, and more, even at low levels of exposure.¹ This is no surprise, given that this chemical was developed as a chemical weapon—nerve gas—by Germany in WWII. There is no excuse for its continued use in the U.S. in 2020. In fact, the largest manufacturer of chlorpyrifos—under the brand-name Lorsban—just announced it will be ending production due to declining sales.² However, generic versions of chlorpyrifos will remain on the market and available in Oregon unless this legislature takes it duty to protect Oregonians seriously.

In December 2014, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) acknowledged the extensive body of peer-reviewed science correlating chlorpyrifos exposure with brain damage to children, including reduced IQ, delayed development, and loss of working memory. And it found drinking water contamination, particularly harmful to infants, and serious risks to workers from handling chlorpyrifos or entering the fields after spraying. After many years of study, EPA scientists concluded in 2015-16 that the chemical should be banned due to the dangers posed by its residues on food and in water. However, after the Trump Administration reversed EPA’s decision to cancel its registration to protect Dow Chemical profits over people, states have taken matters into their own hands to protect their kids and farmworkers.

Oregon must act now to protect our children and farmworkers from chlorpyrifos, an unsafe and unnecessary neurotoxin already phased out in Hawaii—legislation CFS fought for to protect kids who go to school literally feet from the spray³—and California, the number one agricultural producer in the country.⁴ Oregon must also act to protect our kids and farmworkers from this known danger.

Sincerely,
Amy van Saun, Senior Attorney

¹ <http://www.panna.org/resources/chlorpyrifos-facts#1>; <http://www.hapahi.org/chlorpyrifos-fact-sheet>; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3388448/>.

² <https://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/press-releases/5915/center-for-food-safety-statement-on-cortevass-decision-to-terminate-the-production-of-chlorpyrifos>.

³ <http://www.protectourkeiki.org/>.

⁴ Richard Gonzales, *California Bans Popular Pesticide Linked to Brain Damage in Children* (Oct. 9, 2019), <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/09/768795666/california-bans-popular-pesticide-linked-to-brain-damage-in-children>.

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