

Date: February 21, 2020
Subject: Support for H.B. 4109

Subject: Support for H.B. 4109 The Healthy Kids and Farmworkers Act

Senator Dembrow, Vice-chair Baertschiger and Members of the Committee

My name is Miguel Carlos, I am an agricultural worker. For many years I worked in a nursery applying pesticides and other chemicals. Chlorpyrifos is used in nurseries for insect control. Weed killer, insecticides, pesticides and many others that I do not know the technical names of. I have personally felt extremely negative health effects from the use of pesticides.

Two years ago while I applied pesticides, I began to feel bad. When I stopped and got up, I felt that the air was running out, and a discomfort in my chest. I went to the doctor and they told me that I had asthma. They gave me medications that helped me, not by much. In the early morning I could not breathe, I lacked the air and felt discomfort in my chest. I went to Silverton's hospital, from there they sent me to Salem Hospital. My situation was complicated, I was intubated, and I was in for about a week, because my lungs stopped working. The doctors said that the pesticides had their effect on my health.

I was able to get out of this situation alive. Now I am in rehab, recovering little by little. Every time I go outside and breathe I can't stop thinking about other workers who didn't have the same fate as me.

As an agricultural worker, I want to share my experiences working in the fields and the health hazards we go through. While I can't say Chlorpyrifos was the sole pesticide that aggravated my health conditions, I know that I have come into contact with this neurotoxic pesticide because it's used a lot in nurseries.

Oregon needs to protect us and our children from this toxic pesticide. I strongly support HB 4109 to protect workers and their families. To avoid cases like mine and other people who do not share it for fear of retaliation. I urge your support in protecting the health of our communities.

Sincerely,
Miguel Carlos Sosa
Woodburn, OR