

Testimony in Support of SB 426

TO: Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and Committee Members

FR: Alyssa Rueda

DT: February 14, 2023

RE: Testimony to the Senate Education Committee on Toxics Free Schools SB 426

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and Committee Members,

I am writing to express my support for SB 426. I have two young sisters that go to school in an Oregon elementary school. Five days out of the week they go to school and they sit in the same classrooms and the same cafeteria. They play in the same gym and their favorite part of the day is recess. We come from the desert where it is very dry and rarely rains therefore moving to Oregon was a beautiful shift to lovely outdoor sceneries. At school, they are surrounded by colorful trees and plants and lots of grass. SB 426 can ensure that my sisters are protected from dangerous pesticide exposure in all these spaces.

SB 426 also promotes transparency from school districts to disclose what pesticides are used within schools grounds. It is essential that school districts maintain a record of what pesticides are used on the properties and that the records be made accessible for concerned parents, sisters and other individuals. Especially, with the use of the modern technology we have now. There are things that we know now that we didn't know in the past, laws must stay with the times and always maintain updated methods to protect children from harms. This is also why stakeholders, such as the Department of Education and children's health experts need to be included in decision making for pesticide use on school grounds. This allows for constructive communication between agencies involved in children's education and children's health to guide the direction of pesticide management issues.

Reduction of children's exposure to dangerous pesticides should always be a priority. SB 426 ensures that pesticides are treated like other toxics in schools, such as radon, lead, and asbestos. All of these have specific testing timelines and require school districts to record and report their presence. There was a time when we didn't test for these toxics because we were not aware of

the risks. Thankfully now we have laws set to protect children from lead, asbestos, and radon.
We can do the same for pesticides!

Thank you for your time and I strongly encourage the Senate Education Committee to pass SB
426 to protect children from exposure to harmful pesticides.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Rueda