



## Testimony in support of SB 907

3/15/2023

Dear Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Bonham and Members of the Senate Labor and Business Committee,

Beyond Toxics is an Oregon environmental justice nonprofit and has served Oregonians since 2001. We represent communities of color and lower income individuals that are impacted by poor air quality and other environmental threats. We envision a society where everyone has equitable access to healthy food and clean air and water, and underserved communities are not shouldering a disproportionate burden of toxic pollution.

Beyond Toxics has a long history of striving to protect workers from pesticide and chemical exposures. We were a major stakeholder working with Oregon OSHA crafting the Pesticide Exclusion Zone regulations to protect farmworkers from pesticide drift. During the rulemaking process, we heard dozens of testimonies from workers who were required by their employers to work with dangerous pesticides without proper PPE, without safe and properly working equipment, and/or without proper training and licensing. Workers had no recourse to ask for safer working conditions. Out of fear of losing their jobs, they felt they had to continue their work knowing that they were being exposed to harmful levels of pesticides. SB 907 can fix this situation by allowing employers the opportunity to remove or fix the hazardous conditions or reassign a worker to a different job, in which case the worker would not have a right to refuse.

Oregon already has rules allowing workers to refuse unsafe work. However, based on the testimony of workers, this right is very difficult to exercise, and often results in retaliation. SB 907 asks the Oregon legislature to guarantee the “right to safe work” by making this *existing* right easier to exercise.

We appreciate the opportunity to give public testimony and we urge the Committee’s full support of SB 907.

Sincerely,

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