

Submitter: Brad Lerch
On Behalf Of: Myself and my company
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2684
Subject: Support for HB 2684 – Strengthening School Integrated Pest Management Plans

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brad Lerch, my family owns and runs an organic farm and Cafe Mam Organic & fair trade coffee. I am writing in strong support of House Bill 2684 because it is essential for protecting Oregon students and school staff from unnecessary pesticide exposure while promoting safer pest management practices in schools.

Protect Children's Health in Schools: Children are especially vulnerable to pesticide exposure due to their developing immune and nervous systems. HB 2684 ensures that school districts review, update if needed, and readopt plans every 5 years. Reviewing and re-adopting School IPM plans is an essential process for school districts to ensure their plans are up to date with modern science that agencies use to amend pesticide laws.

Promote Accountability and Responsible Policy Updates: Requiring regular updates to school IPM plans ensures that outdated and ineffective practices are replaced with the latest research-backed strategies. This bill helps school districts maintain best practices in pest management while protecting students, teachers, and school staff from exposure to harmful chemicals.

Increase Transparency and Public Access to IPM Plans: Currently, many parents and educators are unaware of the pesticides used in their schools. HB 2684 requires school districts to make their Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plans and low-impact pesticide lists available online, ensuring families and school staff have easy access to critical safety information.

Add School Gardens to the school's IPM plan. School gardens are important learning spaces and food growing spaces. Children love being in school gardens! Many pesticides used in schools can harm pollinators that are attracted to school gardens. The law needs to be updated to make sure school gardens are protected from pesticide drift and deposition.

I urge you to support HB 2684 to protect students, school staff, and our environment by ensuring stronger, more transparent, and science-based pest management practices in Oregon schools. Please do not give in to the chemical polluters and their

lobbyists.

Sincerely,
Brad Lerch
Eugene, OR