



FROM: The Oregon Zoo

TO: House Committee on Agriculture and Land Use

SUBJECT: Support for HB 3058

Chair Witt and members of the Committee on Agriculture and Land Use,

The Oregon Zoo is writing to express our strong support for HB 3058 and companion legislation SB 853.

The Oregon Zoo is dedicated to the welfare and conservation of Oregon's native species as well as imperiled wildlife around the world. In partnership with federal and state agencies and non-governmental organizations, we work to recover populations of endangered species including California condors, coastal butterflies and western pond turtles. We represent more than 44,000 member households and each year welcome more than 1.5 million visitors—more than any cultural institution in the greater region. They come because they are fascinated by, and care about, wildlife. By offering up-close encounters with a wide variety of animals at the zoo and sharing inspiring stories and videos through our expansive social media reach, we educate millions of people about the complex issues facing wildlife, including our own Oregon native species, and we encourage them to help us address these issues.

We are especially concerned with the decline in insect populations, both globally and locally. Insects serve essential functions in the ecosystem, often as the sole or significant food source for countless animals including migratory and native birds. Pollinators in particular serve a critical function to humans and in the natural system as a whole. Recent studies indicate that as many as 40 percent of pollinators may be at risk of extinction, with pesticide contamination as one of the key factors in this decline.

This decline is affecting both our honey bee populations and our native bees and butterflies. In Oregon, incidents of inappropriate use of this neonicotinoids made headlines by causing the death of thousands of native bumble bees. Neonicotinoids are persistent in the environment and have the potential to harm other animals and humans in addition to insects and thus are strongly regulated in Europe.

There are four species of insects federally listed as endangered in Oregon. The Oregon Zoo is working with partners to recover two of them--the Taylor's checkerspot and Oregon silverspot butterflies. This work has been underway for 25 years. Widespread insecticide use threatens this effort. We want to see recovery and reduce the risk of additional listings.

The Oregon Zoo is engaged in teaching our visitors about the importance of pollinators and how they can help support these important animals by creating habitat in their own yards and businesses and reducing or eliminating use of toxic chemicals. While education is important, it

is not enough. We strongly support this legislation's limits on use of neonicotinoids to those who have received proper training in their application.

The Oregon Zoo is grateful for this opportunity and for your consideration of this important matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Moore", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Don Moore
Director, Oregon Zoo