

May 8, 2019

Comments in Support of House Bill 2619

The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation (Xerces Society) is pleased to support House Bill 2619. As a conservation organization that works directly with conventional farmers, we are well versed in the importance of balancing pest management strategies and environmental protections.

HB 2619 is narrowly focused following the recommendations of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) scientists to remove chlorpyrifos from use. Oregon should follow the recommendation of these scientists. EPA was poised to ban all food uses of chlorpyrifos, but before the ban was imposed Administrator Pruitt cancelled the proposal. His action came despite years of research showing how low levels of the chemical affect childhood brain development. A 2016 assessment by EPA found no known safe level for human exposure. Fish and wildlife are also at risk from the use of this insecticide. A Biological Evaluation completed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, in conjunction with EPA, found that chlorpyrifos is likely to adversely affect 97% of all species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

While some growers still see the pest management value of this chemical the risks outweigh the benefits of continuing its use. Even small specialty crops, such as Christmas trees, have other options for managing difficult pests. For example, the [Pacific Northwest Pest Management Handbook](#) recommends cultural controls to prevent twig weevil as well as bifenthrin and esfenvalerate for management.

HB 2619 follows the guidance from federal scientists by banning chlorpyrifos, a chemical with years of research demonstrating severe and irreversible harm to human health and the environment.

For these reasons, the Xerces Society supports HB 2619.

Sincerely,
Aimee Code, Pesticide Program Director
The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

Background on the Xerces Society

The Xerces Society is an international nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat. We are based in Oregon and have offices throughout the United States. The Xerces Society is a global leader in pollinator conservation. The Society's work is based on the latest science and is increasingly recognized as the standard for pollinator conservation by organizations such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the organic and natural foods industry, and farmers and farm organizations across the United States and abroad.