



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 100-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 11, 2020

To: [House Committee on Health Care](#)
Representative Andrea Salinas, Chair
Representative Cedric Hayden, Vice-Chair
Representative Rob Nosse, Vice-Chair
Email: hhc.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: [HB 4109](#) – Relating to prevention of health impacts from exposure to chlorpyrifos – **Support**

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. The League positions affirm that natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems, and that pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health, and that agriculture policies should promote farm practices that are environmentally sound.

HB 4109 immediately bans the aerial application of chlorpyrifos, expands the buffer for chlorpyrifos application near a campus or a school, and requires employers to take steps to ensure workers do not enter areas in which chlorpyrifos has been recently applied. It further bans the use, sale, and purchase of pesticide products containing chlorpyrifos. Chlorpyrifos is a hazardous pesticide with severe unintentional human and environmental health impacts. The widespread harm of continued use of chlorpyrifos should no longer be ignored.

Human harm of chlorpyrifos: Chlorpyrifos is a toxic nerve agent pesticide that can impact neural development in children, babies, and fetuses (Rotenburg 2003, Qiao 2003, EPA 2016). These neurodevelopmental impacts have lifelong implications for the affected individuals and for the state of Oregon (Grandjean 2014). Affected individuals suffer from both decreased average lifetime earnings capacity and economic productivity. Even a small decrease in intellectual ability for each individual translates into a significant impact to the population, greatly increasing the number of children who need extra help and extra resources in school and diminishing the economic productivity of the population (Lanphear 2015). No child or family should be expected to bear these consequences.

Agricultural communities are exposed to chlorpyrifos in their homes (Fenske 2003). This can occur from drift as well as by pesticides hitching home on family members exposed at work. Many farmworkers, landscapers, and workers in parks and public works in Oregon have limited English, and certain key training materials and tests on pesticides are currently only available in English, not Spanish. This creates a barrier to understanding the proper use, storage, and disposal of these hazardous chemicals. This increases the risk to these workers that they will contaminate themselves or their clothing and transport that contamination home to their families and communities, in addition to drift from agricultural land.

While labels are designed to communicate proper use and the risks of misuse, research shows that they are ineffective and confuse users (Dugger-Webster 2018). Even trained users frequently misunderstand proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE). A 2000 study by the LWV-OR found that farmworker exposure to pesticides is an ongoing concern in Oregon. Pinos y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), representing Oregon farmworkers, supports banning chlorpyrifos.

Environmental harm of chlorpyrifos: Chlorpyrifos can persist in the environment, where it is very toxic to many bird species, fish, aquatic invertebrates, and key pollinators such as bees (NPIC 2010). Pollinators form a critical part of Oregon’s ecosystems, are known to be declining in Oregon (Cameron 2011), and hold a key role in improving the quantity and quality of agricultural crops (Klatt 2014).

As recommended by EPA scientists, chlorpyrifos should be banned due to the high risk both to the environment and to public health (US EPA, 2016). We urge your support for HB4019 to protect public health and ensure the responsible and sustainable management of our natural resources and environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.



Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President



Amelia Nestler
LWVOR Pesticides Portfolio

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