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Subject: Deschutes River Alliance Endorses HB 4109 to phase out dangerous chlorpyrifos

Dear Chair Salinas, Vice Chairs Hayden and Nosse, Members of the House Health Care Committee,

We are asking you to support HB 4109 and urge its passage.

The Deschutes River Alliance is an evidence-based advocacy organization that works to protect the lower Deschutes River and the larger Deschutes River Basin. Our board of directors includes scientists, conservationists, and people who make their living depending on a clean, clear and healthy river.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) released its draft Integrated Water Quality Report in September, 2019. The Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires Oregon to submit the report to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) every two years.

This year's draft report contains an unpleasant surprise. The dangerous pesticide, chlorpyrifos was, for the first time, listed as limiting water quality in the lower Deschutes River for the lowest 96 miles of the river. It was detected by ODEQ in the stretch of the Deschutes River water located between Pelton Dam and the Pelton Reregulation Dam (the two lowest dams of the Pelton-Round Butte Hydroelectric Complex) in 2018.

The detected levels of chlorpyrifos were in excess of all EPA guidance.

As you are aware, chlorpyrifos is a widely used agricultural pesticide that is toxic to humans, fish, birds and insects - all of whom live or work in or near the lower Deschutes River and the Deschutes River Basin. It is a neurotoxin (cholinesterase inhibitor) that is chemically related to the World War I nerve gas, sarin.

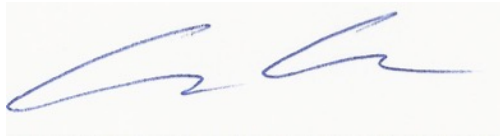
This is a dangerous pesticide with no safe levels for touching or inhaling it through water or air. Chlorpyrifos is so dangerous that it has already been banned in Hawaii, California and New York state, as well as in Europe.

This new listing of such a dangerous pesticide in the lower Deschutes River is cause for alarm and action. People swim, raft, and fish in the river and it is a source of drinking water.

For that reason, the Deschutes River Alliance (DRA) is joining in support of HB 4109 to phase out chlorpyrifos to protect the people most at risk of contact including children and farmworker families. We agree that there should be an immediate prohibition against aerial application from spraying or otherwise applying by aircraft products containing chlorpyrifos to increase the health and safety of farmworkers and their families, and that pesticide products containing chlorpyrifos should not be applied within 300 feet of a school to protect children. And we strongly support the 1/1/22 prohibitions of sale, purchase or use of pesticide products containing chlorpyrifos in Oregon.

We urge you to move quickly on HB 4109 to reduce human and other organisms' exposure to this dangerous pesticide in Oregon.

Sincerely,



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