



NORTHWEST CENTER FOR
ALTERNATIVES TO PESTICIDES

February 20, 2020

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Oregon Legislature
900 Court St. NE,
Salem Oregon 97301

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP) submits this written testimony to urge your support and passage of House Bill 4109.

HB 4109 would prohibit the use and sale of an insecticide called chlorpyrifos in Oregon. As proponents of sustainable agriculture, healthy communities and clean water, we believe this ban is vital to the long-term health of our beautiful state.

Chlorpyrifos Exposes People and Salmon to Substantial Doses of a Neurotoxin

Chlorpyrifos has detrimental effects on human and environmental health. You will undoubtedly hear many testimonies from farmworkers and scientists about the harms to human health and endangered species. According to the EPA, in an average diet, Americans unknowingly consume high amounts of chlorpyrifos, resulting in exposures many times levels EPA deems safe. Shockingly, children ages one to two consume chlorpyrifos in food at levels 140 times their “safe” level, according to EPA estimates.¹ And while chlorpyrifos was deemed harmful enough to human health that it was banned years ago for most residential uses, the farmworkers who grow our food are not protected, absorbing chlorpyrifos through the skin and inhalation as they pick and pack and tend the crops. Additionally, in 2017, the National Marine Fisheries Service determined that chlorpyrifos jeopardizes the survival and recovery of all listed salmon and steelhead in Oregon, Washington and California.²

Safe Alternative Strategies Exist to Reduce Insect Pressure

But what you may not be hearing is that safe, effective alternatives already exist. Many growers in Oregon utilize cost-effective, ecosystem-based alternatives that reduce insect pressure without the use of this harmful broad-spectrum pesticide. By adopting a combination of ecological growing techniques, such as those listed in the attached document, farmers will naturally reduce their reliance on chemical inputs.

¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2016. Chlorpyrifos: Revised Human Health Risk Assessment for Registration Review. <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0653-0454>

² National Marine Fisheries Service. 2017. Endangered Species Act Section 7 Final Biological Opinion: Environmental Protection Agency’s Registration of Pesticides Containing Chlorpyrifos, Diazinon and Malathion, p. B-16.

If pesticides are deemed necessary, farmers have least-toxic alternatives that do not pose significant health effects to humans and wildlife. See the chart in the attached document for many examples.

We know that legislators are reluctant to take tools out of farmers' hands. But in this case, the risk of leaving things as they are is too great—especially when safer options are available. We urge you to please support HB 4109, which will protect Oregon children, farmworkers, farmers, and fish.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this bill.

Sincerely,



Ashley Chesser
Executive Director
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides

Attached:

Chlorpyrifos Alternatives: The Right Thing To Do For Oregon Kids, Farmworkers and Fish!