

Subject: Support for HB 2684 – Strengthening School Integrated Pest Management Plans

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Meredith Tufts and I am a parent and educator in Eugene. I strongly urge you to pass House Bill 2684 to update pest management practices which will protect Oregon students and staff from exposure to harmful pesticides. I work with children as a substitute and have witnessed the many challenges facing children and teachers in our schools today - anything we can do to help improve the health of students, including reducing use of pesticides, will have a positive impact on their overall wellbeing and learning. As a parenting educator, I am also aware of the many challenges and stressors facing families and believe strongly that parents should be able to trust that schools are safe spaces to send their children, including the potential toxins they are exposed to. HB 2684:

Protects Children's Health in Schools: Children are especially vulnerable to pesticide exposure due to their developing immune and nervous systems. HB 2684 ensures that school districts review, update if needed, and readopt plans every 5 years. Reviewing and re-adopting School IPM plans is an essential process for school districts to ensure their plans are up to date with modern science that agencies use to amend pesticide laws.

Promotes Accountability and Responsible Policy Updates: Requiring regular updates to school IPM plans ensures that outdated and ineffective practices are replaced with the latest research-backed strategies. This bill helps school districts maintain best practices in pest management while protecting students, teachers, and school staff from exposure to harmful chemicals.

Increase Transparency and Public Access to IPM Plans: Currently, many parents and educators are unaware of the pesticides used in their schools. HB 2684 requires school districts to make their Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plans and low-impact pesticide lists available online, ensuring families and school staff have easy access to critical safety information.

Adds School Gardens to the school's IPM plan. School gardens are important learning spaces and food growing spaces. Children love being in school gardens! Many pesticides used in schools can harm pollinators that are attracted to school gardens. The law needs to be updated to make sure school gardens are protected from pesticide drift and deposition.

I urge you to support HB 2684 to protect students, school staff, and our environment by ensuring stronger, more transparent, and science-based pest management practices in Oregon schools.

Sincerely,
Meredith Tufts

Eugene