



Chair Lively, Vice-chairs Gamba and Levy, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Abigail Bloom and I am a Sophomore at the University of Oregon. I am writing to you on behalf of OSPIRG Students. We are the University of Oregon's student-run non profit advocacy organization, but we are also a part of the bigger network of National Student PIRGS that are in over 15 states. We address a variety of public interest issues ranging from protecting our oceans to improving campus safety, and in the past couple years, OSPIRG has advanced state bills that work to ban single use plastics and help pass the Right to Repair bill. We are funded through a per-student, per-term fee, which matters because we are funded by the people we represent: the students. OSPIRG Students support House Bill 2679 to limit the use of pesticides with neonicotinoids and ban their use in residential areas, as we want to protect pollinators and preserve Oregon's ecosystem health and biodiversity.

Bees are the cornerstone of our food and biodiversity. They pollinate our flowers and crops, allowing plant reproduction to occur. However, climate change and the use of pesticides are destroying pollinator habitats and endangering many species. One incredibly harmful chemical in these pesticides are neonicotinoids, or neonics, which are harming bees ability to pollinate and reproduce. Neonics bind to and destroy the nerves of bees. This paralyzes bees' bodies, degrading colonies at alarming rates and eventually leading to their collapse. Even lesser exposure to this chemical causes brain damage in bees and makes them susceptible to parasites through the weakening of their immune systems. We must reduce the use of Neonics and protect our pollinators.

OSPIRG Students has been gathering support from the University of Oregon student body to save the bees. In just a few hours of tabling on campus, hundreds of students showed support with photo petitions to ban neonicotinoids statewide and help protect the bees. OSPIRG Students will continue to support pollinator lives and healthy habitats with future petitioning, educational opportunities, and campus sign-ons, as this issue matters to our community.

Eugene, Oregon, where our campus resides, was the United States' first city to ban neonicotinoids, and twelve other states have passed legislation similar to HB 2679, including Washington and California. The rest of Oregon must help restore pollinator ecosystems and follow suit by restricting the purchase and use of Neonicotinoids by passing House Bill 2679.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Abigail Bloom
Save the Bees Campaign Coordinator, OSPIRG Students

Sam Broussard
Board Chair, OSPIRG Students















