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March 4, 2025

Representative Lively, Chair
House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment
Oregon Legislature

Re: Environment Oregon supports House Bill 2679

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

Environment Oregon is a policy and action group with one mission: to restore and protect the natural world. Our staff works for clean air, clean water, clean energy, wildlife, open spaces and a livable climate. Our members across the state put grassroots support behind our research and advocacy. We support House Bill 2679 because we recognize the vital role that pollinators play in sustaining ecosystems and food production.

Bees and other pollinators are essential to Oregon's agriculture and biodiversity, yet they face alarming declines due to habitat loss, climate change and toxic pesticides. Research shows that neonicotinoids (aka. neonics) and other harmful chemicals contribute to bee die-offs by impairing reproduction, navigation and immune function. Without urgent action, these declines threaten biodiversity, food security and Oregon's natural heritage.

This winter, Environment Oregon canvassers have been out in communities talking to Oregonians about the threats facing Oregon's pollinators, and building public support for restricting the use of bee-killing pesticides. Whether we're connecting with gardeners, academics, folks at a farmer's markets, everyday Oregonians on their doorstep, or students from the elementary all the way to the college level, we've seen an outpouring of enthusiastic support for restricting the use of these toxic insecticides to help save bees.

Requiring a pesticide applicator license to purchase and apply neonicotinoids is a common-sense, statewide solution that will keep these dangerous products out of the hands of people that don't understand the havoc they can wreak. Restricting their use on residential property will keep them out of the yards closest to where we live. By passing House Bill 2679, which would accomplish both, Oregon can join 12 other states that have passed similar laws to protect pollinators and ensure a healthier environment for future generations.

Thank you for considering this important legislation, and we urge your support of House Bill 2679.

Sincerely,

Justin Boyles
Conservation Advocate
Environment Oregon