

Submitter: Erik Fletcher  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2679

Dear Chair Lively, Vice-Chairs Gamba and Levy, and members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment,

Thank you for reading my testimony. My name is Erik Dylan Fletcher and I'm writing to you in support of HB 2679, which would classify pesticides containing neonicotinoids (a.k.a. neonics) as restricted-use.

In 2012, I worked on a campaign to organize customers of the Portland Nursery in Northeast Portland to demand that the Nursery stop using neonics. I learned from educating people on this issue that most residential gardeners did not want these chemicals in their community killing off bees and other pollinators. Many of our allied nations have phased out the use of these pesticides and I would support even further restrictions on their large-scale use. Industrial-scale misuse poses a big risk to our local ecosystems.

I am also a former conservation worker. I've been contracted to work on operations with the Bureau of Land Management, various State and City Parks & Recreation Departments, and even the Army Corps of Engineers at the Chief Joseph Dam—the northernmost point on the Columbia River. In my work with these entities, I applied pesticides and herbicides, including neonics, but only in cases where failure to contain invasive species would've had even worse environmental consequences.

For example: when working with the Army Corps of Engineers, I applied both herbicide and pesticides to hard-to-reach, recently-burned areas along the Columbia River's riparian zone. We had to reach these locations via boat, as some of them were islands or riverbanks surrounded by cliff sides. The Riparian Damage Mitigation Team I worked with rarely accessed these locations more than twice a year. We used these powerful chemicals only in cases where they were required to prevent rampant expansion of invasive species in a rarely-monitored post-burn zone. We knew we were working with powerful stuff—we were protected by white "bunny suits" covering every inch of our skin, looking like we were walking 'round Chernobyl.

This bill is a good bill which ought to pass without further concessions to nurseries, big agri-biz, or other exceptions to allow industrial-scale or ornamental use of neonics.

I support the exceptions in the original bill, like those for residential users protecting

their homes from the likes of termites. But I do not support any more concessions. Misuse of neonics puts our pollinators—and the crops they pollinate—at the risk of extinction.

Thank you once again for taking the time to read my testimony. Please vote YES on HB 2679 and DON'T water the bill down.

Blessings,  
Erik Dylan Fletcher  
Tigard, OR