

Submitter: Juliet Grable

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2679

Subject: Support for HB 2679 – Protecting Pollinators and Wildlife

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to voice my strong support for House Bill 2679. This legislation is urgently needed to protect pollinators, water quality, and public health.

Protecting pollinators. Neonicotinoids can be present in pollen and nectar, making them toxic to pollinators that feed on them; they are highly toxic in small quantities to bees. Because they are so persistent, these chemicals can harm pollinators even when they are applied months before a plant blooms.

Bees, butterflies, and other pollinators are in steep decline, and studies show that neonicotinoids play a major role in their population collapse. These pesticides impair pollinators' ability to forage, reproduce, and navigate, putting Oregon's food systems and ecosystems at risk.

Oregon is home to 600 native bee species. The state also provides critical stepping-stone habitat for Western monarch butterflies, which breed and feed in the state. This beloved and iconic butterfly species is likely to be listed as Threatened this year, and pesticides are one of their top three threats. HB 2679 can help protect these essential species by restricting the unnecessary use of neonicotinoids in residential areas.

Protecting water quality. Neonicotinoids are highly water-soluble and frequently contaminate streams, lakes, and drinking water. Even at low concentrations, they are toxic to fish and aquatic life. By classifying neonicotinoids as restricted-use pesticides, HB 2679 will reduce pesticide runoff and safeguard Oregon's water quality.

Protecting human health. These pesticides are bad for human health, too. Many studies have linked neonicotinoid exposure to neurological damage, developmental disorders, and reproductive harm in humans. Children, pregnant individuals, and agricultural workers are particularly vulnerable. HB 2679 is a necessary step to protect public health by limiting exposure to these dangerous chemicals.

Several states, including Washington, California, and Nevada, have already taken steps to limit access to residential neonicotinoid use. Oregon should follow suit to

protect its ecosystems, communities, and economy from the harmful effects of these pesticides. This bill will keep these pesticides out of the hands of untrained users and remove them from retail sales.

I urge you to support HB 2679 to safeguard pollinators, protect public health, and reduce pesticide contamination in Oregon's environment.

Sincerely,
Juliet Grable
Ashland