



Pollinator Project
Rogue Valley



To: House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment

Date: 3/4/2025

Regarding: **Support for House Bill 2679**

Dear Chair John Lively, Vice Chair Gamba, Vice Chair Levy, and Members of the Committee,

The undersigned environmental organizations urge your strong support for HB 2679 to Protect Pollinators and Wildlife.

Twelve other states have already taken action to restrict the use of neonicotinoid pesticides to licensed applicators only and to remove them from consumer-oriented grocery, garden, and hardware stores. HB 2679 would similarly restrict neonicotinoid pesticides from consumers' purchase, and require an Oregon pesticide applicator license to purchase and apply them. Additionally, the bill would prohibit the application of these pesticides on residential landscapes, except in emergency cases, such as treating an invasive pest. Neonicotinoids would remain available for sale to licensed applicators, and for use by farmers, veterinarians (for flea and tick control), and for use in human lice treatments.

Oregon already restricts over 400 dangerous pesticides from general consumer purchase and use. Neonicotinoids should also be listed for restriction. Lower-toxicity alternatives exist that can replace neonicotinoids for common household and garden uses.

Significant harm to biodiversity and species survival is not always as immediately shocking and observable as the massive bee-die offs that took place in Wilsonville or Eugene in 2013 and 2014. **Peer-reviewed research studies confirm that chronic exposure to very low levels of neonicotinoids can cause sublethal effects** capable of decimating populations of beneficial pollinators including reproductive disorders,

the ability to feed and forage, and cumulative neurological effects. ^{1,2}

In 2015, and further updated in 2017, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, an international group of independent scientists, published a comprehensive scientific assessment of the ecological effects of neonicotinoid pesticides to date. ³ The landmark review identified clear evidence of harm to honeybees and a larger number of beneficial species, including birds and aquatic insects at the base of food chain. **Their conclusion was that neonicotinoids present a major world-wide threat to biodiversity and ecosystem services.**

Bees and other pollinators are vital to our environment, supporting more than 80% of wild plants and crops like apples, cherries, and blueberries. Yet, they're in crisis. With one in four bee species at risk of extinction and over 100 bird and fish species in need of conservation in Oregon, the stakes are high for the future of ecosystems.

Relying on over a decade of research that has shown neonicotinoid insecticides are a major culprit in the die-off of pollinators and other wildlife, 12 other states have stepped up to restrict use of these chemicals, including Washington, Nevada and California.

Oregon must not continue to fall behind other states and countries who have already taken action to reduce the continued decline in abundance and diversity of many beneficial insects due to overuse of neonicotinoid pesticides.

We urge House Climate, Energy, and Environment committee members to take a decisive stance to support HB 2679 with a "do pass" vote. By taking action, Oregon can provide renewed leadership to protect pollinators, wildlife, our environment, and the biodiversity heritage of future generations.

Sincerely,

Beyond Toxics
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Food Safety
Columbia Riverkeeper
Environment Oregon
Food and Water Watch
Friends of Family Farmers
Great Old Broads for the Environment
Lane County Audubon

NW Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides
Oregon Environmental Council
Oregon OSPIRG
Oregon Wild
PCUN
Pollinator Project Rogue Valley
Portland Garden Club
Rewild Your Campus
Sierra Club, Oregon Chapter

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 2. Chatzaki, V., Montoro, M., El-Rashid, R., Jensen, A. B., & Lecocq, A. (2023). A New Approach for Detecting Sublethal Effects of Neonicotinoids on Bumblebees Using Optical Sensor Technology. *Insects*, 14(8), 713.
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