



February 20, 2020

TO: Chief Clerk Sekerak  
RE: Vote Explanation for HB 4109

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

I wish to submit the following explanation for my vote on House Bill 4109.

My first goal is, and will always be, to protect the health and well being of everyone in Oregon. Our farm workers and families in communities around agricultural working lands should be certain they are not being exposed to harmful substances. In this, I believe the goals of HB 4109 Committee Report and Minority Report are the same.

I voted for the HB 4109A Minority Report because I believe it took steps to protect farm workers and agricultural communities, while also maintaining our vibrant agricultural sectors. The regulated use of chlorpyrifos has been a necessary tool for many of Oregon's specialty crops, many of which do not have a usable alternative pesticide. The Minority Report would have balanced the needs of growers and workers by immediately banning all aerial spray of chlorpyrifos, and setting robust restrictions on its use to protect the health of workers and neighbors. For example, its use anywhere within 300 feet from a school would be banned, and an 8-day wait period would be mandated before farm workers are allowed back into a field where it has been used.

The Minority Report would have moved towards a ban on chlorpyrifos while giving the Department of Agriculture, farmers and researchers at Oregon State University the time to find alternatives. It also would have given policy makers the opportunity to review the recent actions by California and Washington, and learn best practices from their approaches. For example, the Washington State bill on chlorpyrifos allows for use in times of emergency, like invasive species damaging native and specialty crops; it also phases out chlorpyrifos.

My priority, like all those who voted for both the Committee Report and the Minority Report, is the health and safety of all Oregonians. I supported the Minority Report, because it would have increased our health and safety protections, while allowing stakeholders to find safer alternatives.

Sincerely,

Representative Susan McLain

