



## SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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### NEWS RELEASE

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**Bill will help protect students' health from unnecessary pesticides**  
*SB 637 requires schools to adopt integrated pest management plans*

SALEM – Legislation that will help reduce health risks to Oregon school children found support in the Senate this morning. Senate Bill 637 requires school governing bodies to adopt an integrated pest management plan for school campuses no later than July 1, 2012.

“The pesticides currently being used on many school campuses pose serious health risks to our children’s development,” said Senator Suzanne Bonamici (D-Washington Co./Portland), chief sponsor and champion of the bill. “By using a different approach, we can reduce exposure to potentially harmful chemicals while employing a cost-effective alternative.”

According to a survey of 103 Oregon school districts conducted by the Oregon Environmental Council, 87 percent of schools report using pesticides, most of the time to kill weeds outside buildings, on athletic fields, lawns and playgrounds. Seventy-two percent of Oregon schools have no pest control policy in place to guide their pest control practices and decisions. These sprayings can be excessive in volume and frequency, creating unnecessary exposure to students and school employees.

“There is a smarter, more ecologically sound way to approach this problem,” said Senator Mark Hass (D-Beaverton), chair of the Senate Education Committee. “Integrated pest management asks schools to implement common sense approaches and move away from risky toxins.”

Integrated pest management programs use information on the life cycles of pests and their interaction with the environment to control the population. When used with low-impact pesticides, these programs are able to manage pests with the least possible harm to people, property, and the environment. Additionally, experience from other schools demonstrates that once implemented, integrated pest management plans can produce savings over time.

The bill will now go to the House for consideration.

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