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# Pesticide Regulation Still Uncertain After GOP Walkout Prevents Vote

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by **Monica Samayoa** (https://www.opb.org/contributor/monica-samayoa/) [Follow \(\)](#) OPB March 6, 2020 2:45 p.m. | Updated:

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March 7, 2020 2:01 p.m.

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The legislative short session's early end (https://www.opb.org/news/article/oregon-2020-republican-walkout-legislative-session-ends/) means it will be up to a state agency workgroup, not elected officials, to decide on possible limits on the use of the controversial pesticide chlorpyrifos.

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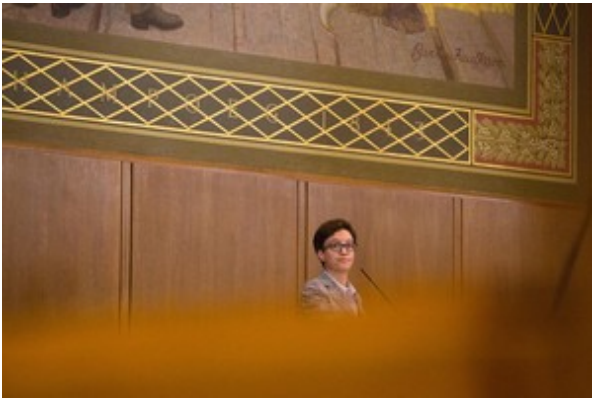
House Bill 4109 (https://www.opb.org/news/article/oregon-lawmakers-chlorpyrifos-ban-proposal/), which would have phased out and ultimately banned chlorpyrifos, made it to a scheduled Senate vote and the final step before going to the governor to be signed into law. But the walkout by Republican lawmakers who did not want a climate bill to be considered prevented the pesticide bill from getting that vote.

Rep. Andrea Salinas, D-Lake Oswego, said she was impressed by the amount of work advocates and supporters like Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN) and Beyond Toxics did to put health impacts at the forefront of this bill. She also said it was important that they brought along the scientific evidence to back their position (https://www.opb.org/news/article/chlorpyrifos-phase-out-house-vote/).

"I think this time around having the focus really be on healthcare and the effect on our families and kids really helped kind of change the debate," Salinas said.

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Last year (https://www.opb.org/news/article/oregon-epa-failed-chlorpyrifos-ban-toxic-pesticide/), a similar



bill to ban chlorpyrifos met the same fate due to a Republican walkout.

PCUN's Martha Sonato said the bill had the votes to pass in Senate and the only reason why it didn't move forward was because of the Republican walkout. She said this time around they have built a really strong foundation to continue the work to move forward.

Sonato is one of 13 members who will be taking up the issue outside the capitol building, instead focusing their efforts in the Oregon Department of Agriculture's chlorpyrifos workgroup

(<https://www.opb.org/news/article/oregon-2020-republican-walkout-legislative-session-ends/>)

## Oregon's 2020 Legislative Session Ends With Little To Show After Republican Walkout

(<https://www.opb.org/news/article/oregon-2020-republican-walkout-legislative-session-ends/>)

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(<https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Pesticides/RegulatoryIssues/Pages/PesticideRulem> will meet later this month.

“We’ll continue showing up in good faith, working with our different workgroup members and as well as pushing to improve the workgroup structure and the conversations that we are having there,” Sonato said.

“I think it’s paramount that we take scientific and public health data very seriously and this data should inform risk mitigation measures, and any potential recommendations from that workgroup.”

In late February

(<https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Pesticides/RegulatoryIssues/Documents/Document> the Oregon Department of Agriculture added a new member from the Oregon Health Authority to participate in the workgroup. Previously, ODA extended invitations to OHA representatives to be at these meetings but none had been made workgroup members.

The Agriculture Department said in earlier meetings, before the issue was taken up by the Legislature, group members had several questions regarding what the health effects of acute exposure versus chronic exposure to chlorpyrifos and are hoping that adding a toxicologist from OHA will help answer those questions.

Oregonians for Food and Shelter's Interim Executive Director and chlorpyrifos workgroup member Jenny Dresler said she's optimistic that a solution can be found that will benefit all Oregonians.

"We are hopeful that mitigation measures can be identified that help further protect farmworkers and bystanders from exposure to chlorpyrifos, and also maintain the availability of chlorpyrifos so Oregon growers can continue to protect their crops from destructive pests," Dresler said.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture's next chlorpyrifos workgroup meeting will be on March 30.

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