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NEWS

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quire all retailers and importers of toys to report if their toys contain any toxins on a list — determined by Congress and regulatory agencies. Second, it would mandate that those toys stop being sold in the next few years.

Edwards says he thinks the bill will finally pass this session, as Democrats have the majority and he's received past support from some Republicans, particularly former Rep. Jason Conger.

The Toy Industry Association and the American Chemistry Council both opposed the bill previously, according to the *Oregonian*.

Edwards also says he has a bill in its "infancy" that would start a conversation about how to discourage people receiving SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamps) benefits from purchasing junk food. Edwards says he personally doesn't think it's good policy to let people use SNAP to buy things like Cheetos. He says since many people on the program are also enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan, it would be beneficial to direct consumers towards whole foods with higher nutritional content.

"We're incurring high medical costs to treat things like diabetes," Edwards says. He says his idea with his bill banning junk food purchases would mean the state could save money on health care costs down the road.

Banning junk food purchases would disqualify Oregon from federal funding for its nutritional assistance program. Edwards says his bills are meant to be "conversation starters," and he hopes eventually to pass legislation that would give additional money to people on SNAP — but money that would only be good for purchasing nutritious food.

At FOOD For Lane County, spokeswoman Dawn Marie Woodward says FFLC already have several programs in place to encourage people to use SNAP benefits for healthier foods. They have cooking classes where they teach people that buying pre-packaged food is not the best way to get the best bang for their buck.

"We work really hard to educate people at the pantry, but we've never been the food police," Woodward says. With the bill still in its very first stages, FFLC doesn't have a definitive position on it.

Edwards says his junk food tirade legislation cuts interestingly across party lines. He figures that Republicans will not be as interested in doing something like supplementing the national food assistance funds. He also anticipates that what farmers and farm lobbyists have to say will impact what happens with the bill.

The Oregon Senate passed the clean fuels bill Tuesday, Feb. 17. It now heads to the House. — Lucy Ohlsen

BILL SEEKS TO TIGHTEN LAWS ON CHEMICAL SPRAYS

Oregon might be seen as a green and healthy state, but its laws protecting people, pets and lands from the chemicals drifting from aerial herbicide sprays are weaker than the laws in Idaho, Washington and California. Lisa Arkin of Beyond Toxics hopes a new bill introduced into the Oregon Legislature Feb. 10 could change that.

Senate Bill 613 was co-authored by Portland Democrats Rep. Ann Lininger and state Sen. Michael Dembrow. Lane County-area Democrats Paul Holvey, Phil Barnhart and Floyd Prozanski have signed on as co-sponsors. The Triangle Lake area of the county in Oregon's Coast Range has long battled over pesticide drift (herbicides are a subset of pesticides), and residents and children there were the focus of a state and federal investigation into the issue after the herbicides 2,4-D and atrazine were found in their urine.

"People have the right to safety and health on their own property," Arkin says. "The bill respects that." She says the legislation would give "guidance and policies for timber companies to be better neighbors by informing when there will be a chemical application."

Under current Oregon law, applicators list chemicals that might be sprayed in a spray notification, but not what is actually sprayed, and the window of when the spray occurs can be months-wide with no specific date given.

Arkin points by way of example to spray notices for the area near King Estate Winery in Lorane (see Spray Schedule this issue). One of the notices has a window from March 1 to July 31 and calls for spraying "atrazine, clopyralid, glyphosate, hexazinone and sulfometuron methyl" with the additives "Crosshair and Grounded and Foam Buster and Odor Mask and No Foam." Another notice for the Lorane area lists approximately 20 chemicals that could be sprayed. The sprays are near streams and wetlands, according to the spray notices Arkin obtained from the Oregon Department of Forestry.

In a 2013 incident in Curry County, residents became sick, pets died and for months no one knew what chemicals were in the toxic soup that rained down over their homes. The bill, known as the Public Health and Water Resources Protection Act, would require pesticide applicators to provide advanced community notice about aerial spraying and controlled burning.

The SB 613 would also create buffers around homes and schools where pesticides could not be applied by helicopter, and it would expand buffers around fish-bearing streams and drinking-water sources. However, the bill does not say what the buffers should be and instead directs the state's Department of Forestry board to establish them around homes, schools, drinking water sources and fish-bearing streams.

"It doesn't solve everything, Arkin says of the bill," but it attempts to hone in on the most egregious problem — that on your own property you don't have the right to be notified by your neighbor of an upcoming danger." — Camilla Mortensen

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