

Senator Calls for Investigation of Bernhardt's Role in Suppressing Science Showing Pesticide Harmed Nearly 1,400 Protected Species

By [Center For Biological Diversity](#)

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U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) today [called on](#) the inspector general for the Department of the Interior to [investigate](#) Acting Secretary David Bernhardt's role in blocking a scientific assessment showing the pesticide chlorpyrifos threatens the existence of nearly 1,400 protected species.

Bernhardt's efforts to suppress the studies, which were completed in October 2017 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, were revealed in a document obtained by the Center for Biological Diversity through the Freedom of Information Act. Those findings were highlighted in a *New York Times* [investigation](#) published this week.

"We welcome any effort to shed light on this disgraceful scandal," said Brett Hartl, director of government affairs at the Center. "It's disgusting that after pesticide companies asked for evidence of catastrophic harm to endangered species to be buried, Bernhardt gladly pulled out the shovels."

The determination by Fish and Wildlife Service scientists that the insecticide jeopardizes 1,399 plants and animals on the endangered species list prompted no action by the Trump administration to curb its use. Instead the administration worked to undercut the findings and delay all further efforts to assess and reduce the impacts of pesticides on endangered species.

Wyden's request comes a day after he questioned Bernhardt about the buried assessments during the acting secretary's confirmation hearing before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, of which Wyden is a senior member.

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