



October 18, 2017

Senator Anne Gobi, Senate Chair
Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture
Room 513, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

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Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture
Room 473F, State House
Boston, MA 02133

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RE: Support for S.451/H.2926, *An Act to Protect Pollinator Habitat*

Maureen O'Shea
Clerk

Dear Chairwoman Gobi and Chairman Pignatelli:

Elliott Carr

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) respectfully requests that the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture support *An Act to Protect Pollinator Habitat* (S.451/H.2926) and report this legislation out with a favorable recommendation.

Robert Ciolek

Michael Corrigan

DeeDee Holt

Founded in 1968, APCC is the Cape Cod region's leading nonprofit environment advocacy and education organization, working for the adoption of laws, policies and programs that protect and enhance Cape Cod's natural resources and quality of life.

Thomas Huettner

Pat Hughes

Cheryl Lubin

S.452/H.2916 would establish a special commission to study opportunities for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to improve the health of our pollinators by increasing and enhancing pollinator habitat, as well as other issues relevant to pollinator health. Protecting our pollinators is critically important to both the ecological and economic wellbeing of our state. Loss of pollinator habitat, and other factors affecting pollinator health, including diseases, parasites, competition from invasive species, climate change and the impact of pesticides on insect pollinators, has resulted in a troubling decline in important pollinator species.

Blue Magruder

Eliza McClennen

Donald Palladino

Kris Ramsay

APCC supports the objectives of the commission, which will be tasked with undertaking a wide-ranging investigation of programs and policies from other states and countries intended to protect and improve pollinator habitat. It will also study how agricultural lands and various types of nonagricultural lands can be better utilized for pollinator habitat, as well as ways to engage businesses and the public in educational programs to help address pollinator habitat. The commission's findings will be presented to the legislature along with possible proposed legislation.

The commission's study of the issues and recommended actions to take to protect and enhance pollinator habitat and improve pollinator health will be particularly important with regard to the impact of neonicotinoid pesticides on bees, and how the commission's findings

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might guide future policies on the pesticide's use in Massachusetts. Exposure to neonicotinoids has been linked to bee deaths and weakened and reduced honeybee hives. Its use in Massachusetts and elsewhere is widespread. A recent study of honey samples collected around the world revealed the presence of neonicotinoids in three-quarters of the samples. In North America, the pesticide was present in 86 percent of the honey samples analyzed. (Mitchell, et al., 2017)

The establishment of this special commission will be an important first step in the actions we must undertake to address the population declines of important pollinator species. APCC thanks the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture for their careful consideration of this legislation and urges the committee to act swiftly in reporting it out with a favorable recommendation.

Sincerely,

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to read 'Andrew Gottlieb', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Gottlieb
Executive Director

cc: Sen. Julian Cyr
Sen. Viriato deMacedo
Rep. Sarah Peake
Rep. Timothy Whelan
Rep. William Crocker
Rep. David Vieira
Rep. Dylan Fernandes
Rep. Randy Hunt
Sen. Jason Lewis
Rep. Mary Keefe