

Supporting New York State Senate Bill S699D And New York State Assembly Bill A7429A, The New York State Birds And Bees Protection Act

Referred to: The Energy, Environment and Sustainability Committee (Chairwoman Greene and Legislators Hansut, Erner, Maloney, and Stewart)

Legislator Kathy Nolan and Legislators Erner, Hansut, Heppner, Stewart and Uchitelle offer the following:

WHEREAS, the Birds and Bees Protection Act concerns use of neonicotinoids, or "neonics," which is a class of neurotoxic pesticides that includes imidacloprid, thiamethoxam, clothianidin, dinotefuran, and acetamiprid; and

WHEREAS, research shows that widespread use of neonics is a leading cause of decline in honeybees as well as pollinators and a threat to birds, fish, whitetail deer, and entire ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, New York's agricultural economy depends on healthy populations of bees and other pollinators to produce valuable and healthy foods like apples, squash, tomatoes, cherries and other top crops, worth an estimated \$439 million annually; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County's agricultural economy similarly depends on healthy populations of bees and other pollinators to produce valuable and healthy crops and foods; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County has designated itself a Pollinator Friendly Municipality pursuant to Resolution No. 375 of September 17, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the United States Environmental Protection Agency and other independent research has found that neonics can harm human health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have found that half of Americans are regularly exposed to neonics; and

WHEREAS, Federal and State water testing has detected neonics in waters across New York State, with 30% of Long Island groundwater samples containing a neonic; and

WHEREAS, a Cornell University review from 2020 of over 1,100 peer reviewed papers on neonics and cost-benefit analysis of neonics against their likely alternatives ("Cornell Report") concluded that neonic-treatments on corn, soybean, and wheat seeds — which account for roughly three-quarters of all neonic use in New York agriculture — produce "no overall net-income benefit" to farmers using them; and

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WHEREAS, the Cornell Report also found that non-agricultural, turf and ornamental neonic uses, with the exception of certain treatments for invasive species, were similarly unneeded or replaceable with safer, effective alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the bill would: (1) prohibit sale and use of neonic-treated corn, soybean, and wheat seeds effective January 1, 2025; (2) prohibit non-agricultural uses of neonics on turf and ornamental plants, effective January 1, 2024; and (3) allow the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to permit use of neonics to combat invasive species, including but not limited to emerald ash-borer and hemlock woolly adelgid; and (4) require DEC, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture and Markets, Cornell University, and the New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry to study alternatives to neonics; and

WHEREAS, the Birds and Bees Protection Act addresses a serious threat to pollinators and ecosystems and safeguards the future of New York's food system by banning high risk, low-to-no benefit uses of neonicotinoid insecticides; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature does hereby support and encourage advancement of S699D / A7429A, banning neonic-treated corn, soybean, and wheat seeds and most outdoor, non-agricultural uses of neonicotinoid insecticides; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall provide a copy of this resolution to Governor Kathy Hochul; Basil Seggos, NYS Commissioner of Department of Environmental Conservation; Mary T. Bassett, M.D., M.P.H., NYS Commissioner of Health; Richard Ball, NYS Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture; and our local New York Senate and Assembly representatives, Honorable Michelle Hinchey, Honorable James Skoufis, Honorable Peter Oberacker, Honorable Kevin Cahill, and Honorable Jonathan Jacobson,

and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 23 NOES: 0

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Assembly Bill A7429A, The New York State Birds And Bees
Protection Act**

Passed Committee: Energy, Environment and Sustainability on July 7, 2022

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE

STATE OF NEW YORK

ss:

COUNTY OF ULSTER

I, the undersigned Clerk of the Legislature of the County of Ulster, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is the original resolution adopted by the Ulster County Legislature on the 19th Day of July in the year Two Thousand Twenty-Two, and said resolution shall remain on file in the office of said clerk.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the County of Ulster this 22nd Day of June in the year Two Thousand Twenty-Two.

s/ Victoria A. Fabella
Victoria A. Fabella, Clerk
Ulster County Legislature