

Declaring Ulster County A Pollinator Friendly Municipality And Promoting Landscape Maintenance and Practices To Attract And Sustain Pollinator Species

Referred to: The Public Works and Capital Projects Committee (Chairwoman Petit and Legislators Fabiano, Greene, Litts, and Nolan), and The Energy and Environment Committee (Chairwoman Greene and Legislators Eckert, Heppner, Wawro and Woltman)

Legislator Kathy Nolan offers the following:

WHEREAS, Ulster County has a history of protecting our local environment, including open space, forest preserves, surface waters, and rare and endangered plants and animals; and

WHEREAS, the recent swift and dramatic global declines in insect populations highlights the degree to which humans are dependent upon pollinators in our gardens, crops, food chain and ecosystems, making it necessary to continue our commitment to their protection; and

WHEREAS, there are now eight (8) endangered species of bees in the United States, one of which, the Rusty Patched Bumblebee, was native to but now is no longer found in Ulster County; and

WHEREAS, recent data documents dramatic declines in insect populations in the United States and globally; and

WHEREAS, neonicotinoid pesticides are absorbed into the pollen and nectar of plants and can remain present for years, causing potentially lethal neurotoxic effects on visiting insects, especially bees; and

WHEREAS, insectivorous bird populations (birds relying on a diet of insects, other invertebrates, and worms) have declined as much as thirty-three percent (33%) since the 1970s, the most rapid drop in population in any bird group; and

WHEREAS, the flight range of our smallest pollinators may encompass individual lawns and gardens, with one single backyard being the entire world to some of our pollinating insects, giving each and every person the power to effect change to create a healthier and more sustainable future; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County, through Local Law No. 4 of 2004 "... Requiring Non-Toxic Landscape Maintenance On Land Owned Or Leased By The County Of Ulster," is committed to minimizing the use of toxic herbicides and insecticides; and

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WHEREAS, Local Law No. 3 of 2006 imposes on residents and commercial businesses in Ulster County notification requirements prior to the use of certain pesticides; and

WHEREAS, introduction of carbon-sequestering grasses and plants can reduce Green House Gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Olive is one of eight municipalities in New York State that have taken the National Wildlife Federation's Municipal Monarch Pledge; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County has been a leader in working with partners in agriculture, wildlife, and conservation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Ulster County is hereby declared a Pollinator Friendly County; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that Ulster County shall encourage and establish host plants and nectar plant species for local pollinators – bee species, butterflies, moths, and other flying insect species – along with carbon-sequestering grasses and other plants, in and along all County properties and parks; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that, where practicable, Ulster County shall take measures to restore and increase habitat to include native plants with succession blooming, aiming to establish or re-establish carbon-sequestering plants and plants providing pollen and nectar along County roads whenever such roads are reconstructed or repaved and continue timing roadside mowing to minimize impacts on pollinating plants; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that Ulster County shall conduct an inventory of all pesticides it uses and make efforts to phase out the use of neonicotinoid pesticides in favor of lesser toxic methods as part of an Integrated Pest Management System promoting pollinator friendly practices; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that Ulster County will encourage municipalities within Ulster County to adopt practices that promote carbon sequestration and protection of pollinators; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, that Ulster County will encourage local educators to teach about host and nectar plants and to promote the establishment of pollinator gardens at schools and throughout the community; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that Ulster County will encourage residents and gardeners to plant carbon-sequestering ground covers, along with pollinator host and nectar plants native to this region, and to avoid use of neonicotinoid insecticides; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the County Legislature shall forward certified copies of this resolution to the appropriate County Officials,

and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

Passed Committee: Public Works and Capital Projects on _____.

Passed Committee: Energy and Environment on _____.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE