



March 4, 2016

TO: Sen. Ted Kennedy Jr. and Rep. James Albis, Chairmen; Members of the Environment Committee  
RE: **TESTIMONY FOR SB 231 AAC POLLINATOR HEALTH**

**The Connecticut League of Conservation Voters (CTLCV) stands in strong support of SB 231 AAC Pollinator Health in order to reduce the use of neonicotinoid pesticides as rapidly as possible.** We agree with many experts who have submitted testimony that there is evidence-based consensus that pesticides, particularly neonicotinoids, pose a direct threat to pollinators.

With bees dying in record numbers in Connecticut and throughout the country, we applaud the Environment Committee's initiative to address some of the causes that have been identified for this severe decline, including restrictions on pesticide use, habitat loss, and lack of best management practices.

The dangers pesticides pose to pollinators is not a new issue, but governments and agencies have been slow to act. In 2010, Connecticut became the first state in the nation to offer legal protection to bees by adding five bee species to the State's List of Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species. As stated earlier by Connecticut DEEP, "any space created for pollinators should be pesticide free; insecticides are especially harmful to pollinators if applied at the wrong time or application rate."

We further point to the devastating impacts of neonicotinoids to **aquatic life**. Freshwater species are disproportionately represented in the present species die-off with pesticides widely prevalent in our rivers and streams.

We respectfully request that you strengthen provisions of SB 231 in three key areas:

Section 2 - Require a scientific process to determine what other plants are supportive of other pollinators ( such as beetles, flies moths, butterflies and hummingbirds), so these plants and trees may be included in the list of special concern for pesticide restrictions.

Section 4 - Clearly define "agricultural and horticultural purposes" to ensure that it is not interpreted to allow neonicotinoids to be used when they are not warranted. Because the "blooming season" is becoming irregular and less predictable, the restrictions on neonicotinoids must be restricted the full calendar year.

Section 5 - The task force appointments must include experts with scientific or professional expertise related to issues impacting pollinators and non-toxic land management.

Again, thank you for committing to progress on the health of our state's pollinators.

Respectfully submitted, Lori Brown, Executive Director

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**CTLCV.ORG**