

March 3, 2016

Support for S.B. No. 231 - AN ACT CONCERNING POLLINATOR HEALTH

Dear Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis and distinguished members of the Environment Committee;

I am Jeff Cordulack the Executive Director of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut (CT NOFA).

CT NOFA is the first and leading grassroots association advocating for organic food, farming, gardening and land care in Connecticut. CT NOFA has been connecting people in the local sustainable food and land care movements with organic resources and education since 1982. (See ctnofa.org.)

Our 800 members include farmers, gardeners and land care professionals. They greatly value biodiversity, native species and especially the pollinators which are so important for the healthy fruits and vegetables that our members produce and that are in increasing demand in this state. The international principles of organic agriculture are health, ecology, fairness and care.

There are 349 species of bees in Connecticut. Biodiversity is critical to human and ecosystem health and a very important ingredient in successful agriculture. We continue to learn how damaging to biodiversity the widespread and careless use of pesticides is.

I am testifying today in strong support of S.B. No. 231 AN ACT CONCERNING POLLINATOR HEALTH.

Thank you for proposing this bill to protect pollinators. We appreciate the combination of regulation, best practices and education that this bill uses to address the serious issue of pollinator health.

For improvements to this bill, I point to the testimony from Kim Stoner, an entomologist from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station and one of the nation's leading researchers on pollinators and pesticides. She has also been providing important pest control and pollination guidance and support to this state's farmers, landscapers and gardeners for decades.

Narrowing the focus to the pesticides which actually affect pollinators is important. Restricting the use of these pesticides is a smart strategy. Public education is also vital to counter the commercial interests of those who sell pesticides. Including pollinator habitat in land protection is a wonderful idea.

CT NOFA and its members urge this committee to approve Senate Bill 231.

Thank you for your time.



Creating an Organic CT Since 1982



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The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut (CT NOFA)

A growing community of organic farmers, gardeners, land care professionals, businesses and consumers

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