



MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Birds and Bees Protection Act

A.7639A – Englebright

(Currently Not Same As)

S.5816 – Hoylman

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to enacting the birds and bees protection act; and providing for the repeal of certain provisions upon expiration thereof

JUSTIFICATION

Pollinators (including but not limited to bees, beetles, butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds) are an indispensable component of our food web. There is substantial scientific evidence indicating that neonicotinoid pesticides (aka “neonics”) are a significant contributor to the unprecedented decline in pollinator health documented across our state and the nation. Neonics persist in soil for months, and in some circumstances, even years after being applied. At high doses, certain neonics can be highly lethal to bees and other pollinators, while causing difficulties in navigation and foraging, and impacting the immune system at sub-lethal levels. Fipronil has also been shown to be toxic to bees.

Neonic contamination of New York’s waters is widespread, threatening our health and environment. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife study from 2018 found neonics in New York streams “in excess of toxicity and regulatory thresholds.” In 2016, extensive testing of New York surface water by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) found the neonic imidacloprid in nearly 40% of the samples. USGS monitoring of the Long Island aquifer that same year found imidacloprid to be one of the most frequently detected pesticides.

At the federal level, EPA’s repeated and ongoing delays in its own scientific review of neonics and the Trump administration’s unwillingness to prevent unsafe pesticide use have left states with the responsibility to take the lead. This legislation would enact a five year moratorium on the sale and use of any pesticides with the active ingredients clothianidin, imidacloprid, thiamethoxam, dinotefuran, acetamiprid, thiacloprid, nithiazine, or fipronil within the state, beginning in 2021. This will allow the DEC, in consultation with Ag & Markets, to research the latest published and peer-reviewed evidence on whether use of neonics and fipronil causes unreasonable adverse effects on honeybees, native insect pollinators, and birds. The prohibition on the use of neonics and fipronil will sunset in 2026, unless the legislature acts to extend or make the prohibition permanent.

**CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS
A.7639A/S.5816 – BIRDS AND BEES PROTECTION ACT**

CCE is an 80,000 member non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization that works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment

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