

Information on Pending Legislation and the Eight County President's Beekeepers Pollinator Protection Plan Framework

The Massachusetts Pollinator Protection Plan is a Federal mandate from the President through the EPA to be administered by the Mass. Dept of Agricultural Resources (MDAR). The MDAR Commissioner is Mr. John Lebeaux. The Farm Bureau (a Nationwide org with a MA chapter) has authored a Draft Plan Framework which protected pesticide use, called for professional beekeepers to supplant County organizations and weakened County organizations in other ways. They have submitted it to MDAR to be implemented as the MA plan.

A collaboration of 8 county beekeeping organizations and Mass. Bee have authored an alternative plan and submitted it to both the Mass Farm Bureau (FB) and directly to MDAR. A copy of this Framework can be found here - <http://www.plymouthcountybeekeepers.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/09/Beekeepers-Pollinator-Protection-Plan-Framework-FINAL.pdf>.

The legislation is before the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture (The Committee) . This Committee will decide which if any of the following bills will go to the entire legislature for consideration.

The bills before the Legislature are :

H731, An Act to Ensure Proper Stewardship of Honeybees by the Commonwealth. This is an act that opens the door for the pesticide industry to control MA beekeeping. We Recommend you tell legislators to Reject this Bill.

H. 3417, An Act to Establish a Committee to support bee colony collapse disorder. This committee is to be composed of people tied to the pesticide industry (Farmers, Pest control operators, retailers etc.) and legislators. Nice people perhaps but they have no qualifications for the task. We Recommend Rejecting this Bill.

H. 655, An Act Protecting MA pollinators. This act requires homeowners be informed before commercial landscapers apply neonicotinoid pesticides to their property, retail stores label plants treated with neonics and other sensible controls. We Recommend Passing this Bill.

The Eight County President's Beekeepers Pollinator Protection Plan Framework will be accepted or declined by John Lebeaux Commissioner of MDAR.

