


**REPORT OF THE  
CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

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DATE: December 4, 2013

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Gerry F. Miller   
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File: 13-0002-S134  
Assignment No.: 13-10-0922

SUBJECT: Resolution to support H.R. 2692, the "Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2013," which would preserve the health of America's pollinators.

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution to include in the City's 2013-2014 Federal Legislative Program SUPPORT of H.R. 2692, the "Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2013," which would direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to take certain actions related to pesticides in efforts to preserve the health of bee populations that serve as America's pollinators.

SUMMARY

Resolution (Koretz-Bonin-O'Farrell), introduced on October 23, 2013, proposes that the City of Los Angeles support and/or sponsor H.R. 2692, the "Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2013," which would direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to take certain actions related to pesticides in efforts to preserve the health of bee populations that serve as America's pollinators. More specifically, H.R. 2692 would require the EPA to suspend the use of four of the pesticides belonging to the neonicotinoids class (imidacloprid, clothianidin, thiamethoxam, dinotafuran) until their safety can be determined. Given bees function as the world's most vital pollinators, their survival is a critical component to the long-term security of our food supply, making it incumbent upon the nation to take actions toward their preservation. Resolution (Koretz-Bonin-O'Farrell) therefore recommends that the City support and/or sponsor H.R. 2692, the "Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2013," which would help preserve the health of America's pollinators.

BACKGROUND

On July 16, 2013, United States Representative John Conyers Jr., with United States Representative Earl Blumenauer, introduced a bill, H.R. 2692, the "Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2013," which would direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to take certain actions related to pesticides in efforts to preserve the health of bee populations that serve as America's pollinators. The bill was introduced largely in response to the "colony collapse disorder" (CCD), which in recent years has plagued various bee populations across the country, compromising their survival and therefore threatening the health of the United States agricultural industry as a whole. Over the course of just one year, spanning from the end of 2012 to the end of 2013, U.S. beekeepers lost an average of 45 percent of their colonies. Scientists have linked the symptoms of CCD with what they perceive as an excessive use of pesticides, specifically those of the neonicotinoid class. Scientists have proven that prolonged and systemic

exposure to these insecticides can lead to a variety of detrimental effects, including but not limited to impaired foraging and feeding, weakened immunity to diseases and pests, and stunted development.

Given bees function as the world's most vital pollinators, their survival is a critical component to the long-term security of our food supply. The pollination services provided by bee colonies represent a large component of U.S. agricultural economy, generating approximately \$20-30 billion annually. In their function as nature's primary pollinator, bees contribute to the production of roughly one third of the food produced in North America, including almonds, avocados, cranberries, apples and much more. Nearly all of the dietary Vitamin A, Vitamin E and over half of the calcium and fluoride we consume is provided for by crops that depend on pollination by bees. Additionally, about one-third of iron in our diets is provided by bee-pollinated crops, including a countless variety of fruits and nuts.

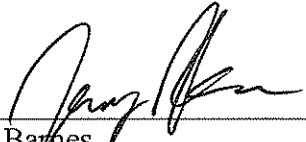
Preservation of the bee population is not only a matter of national concern. California's biggest agricultural export, namely almonds, an industry that generates \$4 billion in annual revenue and accounts for roughly 84 percent of global almond production, depends heavily on bee pollination. Other governmental bodies across the world have taken steps toward the preservation of their respective bee populations, including the European Union, which has enacted a ban on the major neonicotinoids in an effort to protect pollinators. The European Food Safety Authority concluded that neonicotinoids posed a "high acute risk" to pollinators and that more research must be conducted to explore precisely how these chemicals are connected to loss of bee colonies. H.R. 2692 would require the EPA to suspend the use of four of the pesticides belonging to the neonicotinoids class (imidacloprid, clothianidin, thiamethoxam, dinotafuran) until their safety can be determined. The bill would also charge the EPA with monitoring bee health and preparing an annual report on the status of bees in the United States.

DEPARTMENTS NOTIFIED

None

BILL STATUS

07/16/2013 Bill introduced  
07/16/2013 Referred to Com. on Agriculture

  
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Jerry Barnes  
Analyst

GFM:jb

Attachment: Resolution (Koretz-Bonin-O'Farrell)

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RESOLUTION

RULES, ELECTIONS & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations, or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must first have been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, in just the past few years, "colony collapse disorder" (CCD) has been plaguing bees across the country, leading to massive population die-offs. Between the end of 2012 and the end of 2013, U.S. beekeepers lost an average of 45 percent of their colonies, which threatens not only their livelihoods, but the very existence of one of the world's most vital pollinators and, by extension, the long-term security of our food supply; and

WHEREAS, pollination services are a huge component of U.S. agriculture worth \$20-30 billion annually. Bees, in particular, are absolutely necessary for the production of a third of the food produced in North America, including almonds, avocados, cranberries, apples and much more. Bee-pollinated crops provide nearly all of our dietary Vitamin A, Vitamin E and over half of the calcium and fluoride we consume. Additionally, about one-third of iron in our diets is provided by bee-pollinated crops, including fruits and nuts; and

WHEREAS, California's biggest agricultural export, its \$4 billion almond industry, depends on pollinators for the success of the crop which makes up 84 percent of global almond production. Without California's almonds, there would be a tremendous shortage of almonds worldwide; and

WHEREAS, scientists have linked the symptoms of CCD with the abundant use of pesticides, specifically the neonicotinoid class. Exposure to these systemic insecticides over time can lead to sublethal effects like impaired foraging and feeding, weakened immunity to diseases and pests and stunted development; and

WHEREAS, the European Union has enacted a ban on the major neonicotinoids in an effort to protect pollinators. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) concluded that neonicotinoids posed a "high acute risk" to pollinators and that more research must be conducted to explore precisely how these chemicals are connected to loss of bee colonies; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Representative John Conyers, Jr's "Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2013" (H.R. 2692) would require the EPA to suspend the use of four of the pesticides belonging to the neonicotinoids class (imidacloprid, clothianidin, thiamethoxam, dinotafuran) until their safety can be determined. The bill would also charge the EPA with monitoring bee health and preparing an annual report on the status of bees in the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with concurrence of the Mayor, that by adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2013-2014 Federal Legislative Program SPONSORSHIP/SUPPORT for the "Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2013" (H.R. 2692) in order to protect the health of America's pollinators and, by extension, our food supply.

PRESENTED BY Paul Koretz Mike Bonin Mitch O'Farrell  
PAUL KORETZ MIKE BONIN MITCH O'FARRELL  
Councilmember, 5<sup>th</sup> District Councilmember, 11<sup>th</sup> District Councilmember, 13<sup>th</sup> District

[Signature]  
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SECONDED BY [Signature]

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