



**SIERRA  
CLUB**

# **The Pollinator Protection Act**

**SB-198/HB-211**



## **Honey bees in alarming decline**

Research overwhelmingly shows that toxic neonicotinoid pesticides (aka “neonics”) kill and harm bees, butterflies, and birds - posing a serious threat to our food, public health, and wildlife. Last year, Maryland beekeepers lost 61 percent of their bees, about twice the national average and far more than is typical in a year. In addition to killing bees outright, even low levels of these toxic pesticides impair bees’ ability to learn, find their way back to the hive, collect food, produce new queens and mount an effective immune response.

## **One out of three bites of food**

Honeybees and other pollinators are responsible for one out of every three bites of food we eat. Bees pollinate 71 of the 100 crops that make up 90 percent of the world’s food supply. Many fruits and vegetables, including apples, blueberries, strawberries, carrots and broccoli, as well as almonds and coffee, rely on bees.

## **Not so "bee-friendly"**

Surveys show that Marylanders are very concerned about the dangers of pesticides to their health, but consumers lack information about products treated with neonics. More than half of “bee-friendly” plants purchased at Home Depot, Walmart and Lowe’s stores in 18 cities across the U.S. and Canada, including in Maryland, had levels of neonicotinoids sufficient to kill bees outright, according to a recent study by Friends of the Earth.

## **A pervasive, growing threat**

Neonic pesticide use is widespread - neonics are the fastest growing and most heavily used class of pesticides. A November 2015 U.S. Geological Survey study found residue from one of three types of neonics in a majority of native bees sampled. Another USGS study found 59 percent of streams sampled nationwide had detectable levels of neonic contamination - including sampling from the Chesapeake bay watershed.

## **We Need The Pollinator Protection Act**

**We urge you to support and help pass this important Pollinator Protection Act, which would curb consumer purchases of harmful neonicotinoids and ensure consumers know when plants contain these toxic pesticides.**



*The Smart on Pesticides Maryland coalition works to protect Marylanders and the natural systems we depend upon from the toxic impacts of pesticides. The coalition includes more than 75 businesses, organizations and institutions representing communities, beekeepers, farmers, health care providers, environmentalists, Waterkeepers, interfaith congregants as well as environmental justice, public health and wildlife advocates.*

### **For more information, contact us:**

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