

HB208: Agriculture - Neonicotinoid Pesticides - Sale and Storage

House Environment and Transportation Committee

January 29, 2021

Positon: Favorable

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Committee,

In 2016, the Maryland General Assembly passed the Pollinator Protection Act, which was created to restrict the sale of neonicotinoid pesticides to consumers. The bill carefully balanced the needs of Maryland's agricultural community by allowing farmers and registered applicators to continue to purchase and use the pesticide, and restricted its use by the general public.

Unfortunately, some retail stores are continuing to sell neonicotinoids to customers through a loophole in the 2016 law, even though it is illegal for the customers to use them. This loophole is hurting our bees and is undermining the Pollinator Protection Act.

HB208 is a technical fix to enforce the Pollinator Protection Act as it was originally intended. It would clarify that retailers who sell Restricted Use Pesticides may only sell neonicotinoid pesticides to certified applicators or farmers, and must keep the products behind the counter and out of reach of customers without assistance from a staff member.

Certified applicators and farmers would still be allowed to purchase and use the pesticides, but this change will take the pesticides off shelves where customers can mistakenly purchase them.

Thank you for once again taking up this issue of neonicotinoid pesticides, and we ask for a favorable report on HB208.

Thank you,

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