



Delegate Marc Korman, Chairman
Delegate Michele Guyton, Vice-Chair
House Environment & Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: *House Bill 91: Agriculture - Neonicotinoid Pesticides – Prohibitions – Letter of Information*

February 4, 2026

Dear Chairman Korman and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Sports Field Management Association (MASFMA) and the Maryland Turfgrass Council (MTC), we write this letter of information pertaining to the introduction of House Bill 91: *Agriculture - Neonicotinoid Pesticides – Prohibitions*.

MTC represents all areas of the turf industry including golf, sports turf, sod producers, landscape, lawn care and commercial vendors and suppliers. The Mid-Atlantic Sports Field Management Association (MASFMA) is a non-profit organization that is composed of sports turf field managers and workers from Maryland, Delaware, Washington D.C., and Northern Virginia. Once again, MASFMA has partnered with Maryland Turfgrass Council (MTC) this year to bring a more unified front from all aspects of our industry.

As written, House Bill 91 would amend the current law to prohibit an individual from applying neonicotinoid pesticides to treat outdoor ornamental plants and turf.

Over the past decade, restrictions on neonicotinoids in Maryland have been debated by state lawmakers. In 2016, the Maryland General Assembly passed the Pollinator Protection Act which aimed to protect pollinators from the harmful effects of neonicotinoid pesticides. This law took effect on January 1, 2018, which included restrictions on use so that only neonicotinoid pesticides could be applied only by certified pesticide applicators or farmers. Five years later, state lawmakers passed additional legislation to close loopholes ensuring stricter enforcement of the restrictions to prevent retailers from selling neonicotinoid products to consumers.

By restricting their use and ensuring that only trained professionals can apply them, Maryland has laudably managed to mitigate environmental risks associated with these chemicals while also supporting agricultural practices that are safer for the ecosystem. Ten years since the original legislation was passed, House Bill 91 is now before this committee placing additional application restrictions targeting the turfgrass industries (and others).

For the purposes of this letter, MTC and MASFMA would like to share some of our concerns should this legislation become new law. Without neonicotinoids in turfgrass will result in increases of nuisance insects, such as ants and chinch bugs, which can severely damage turf, especially during

warmer seasons. In addition, the potential loss of low-cost neonicotinoids creates a challenge to control ornamental pests like miners and boring insects. For turfgrass, the risk to pollinators is minimal, especially if flowering heads of weeds, like clover are routinely mowed down – which is common practice. Finally, turfgrass management facilities (and golf courses) have pollinator habitats which have established great results with regards to safe and effective use of neonicotinoids.

We hope this letter of information (and our concerns) is beneficial to this committee when making its consideration on this legislation. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our associations for further information, education, or assistance on this issue.

Thank you,



Clint Steele
President, MASFMA



Logan Freeman
President. MTC