

**Glenn Family Farm
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February 2, 2026

RE: Opposition to HB0091 Agriculture - Neonicotinoid Pesticides - Prohibitions

**TO: Environment & Transportation Committee Chairperson Delegate Korman,
E&T Vice Chair Delegate Guyton,
E&T Members Howard County Delegate Ziegler
Delegates Healey and Ruth, co-sponsors
Other Members of the E&T Committee**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB0091. As constituents, 40-year Ph.D. experts in agricultural sciences, including weed science/pesticides and agricultural policy, supporters of local agriculture, members of Howard County Farm Bureau, and members of the Maryland Farm Bureau, we respectfully ask you to oppose HB 0091.

HB 0091 seeks to prohibit distribution, selling or using seeds treated with a neonicotinoid pesticide. It also seeks to allow for exceptions under various circumstances to be led by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Farming and agriculture are the largest commercial industry in Maryland. It is disheartening to our legislators propose a bill that will undermine farming in Maryland.

KEY: Neonicotinoids are approved for use in the United States (US). This bill ignores the current regulatory and statutory expertise and work of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA).

Neonicotinoids are registered by US EPA in the United States and approved for use according to the label in Maryland by MDA.

KEY: Neonicotinoids are used on greater than 90% of commodity crops in the US. The bill ignores the essential economic importance to FARMERS, including the agronomic and environmental benefits of these approved products. There are no alternatives to seed treatment with neonics. Crop losses will be dramatic, greater than 505. Farmers during these challenging times with high input prices, uncertainty in trade, and no Farm Bill, NEED THESE CROP PROTECTION PRODUCTS, now more than ever.

KEY: There is no justification for this bill and it will cost taxpayers. The bill provides NO justification based on ANY factors, for this ban on neonics, but will require new funding to execute. And curiously the bill says (paraphrasing), 'Oh No you can Still Use

them under certain circumstances,' requiring more work by staff of the MDA to back-track and re-state their current approval of safe use in Maryland. A waste of staff time and taxpayer funding.

IN SUMMARY: The actions of the bill will cost farmers and other taxpayers significant expense, with NO benefits in terms of food security, health, safety, and welfare to the citizens of Maryland, animals nor the environment.

Detailed points:

1. **Neonicotinoids are beneficial for farmers and crops.**
 - a. There is no doubt about these benefits and that is why these pesticides are used across about 90% of all commodity crop production as well as with ornamental plants and turf.
2. **The biggest benefit is that** the crop germinates, stand is healthy, and they give early protection from plant pests such as soil-borne fungi, insects (like wireworms, seed corn maggot), and pathogens (like Pythium, Fusarium) for several weeks. **AND** healthier plants increase yield.
3. **Importantly, there are huge environmental & economic advantages**, such as
 - a. Reduced Pesticide Use: By precisely placing chemicals on the seed means less product is needed overall, decreasing field-wide spray applications, fuel use, and labor.
 - b. Lower Environmental Impact: Minimizes exposure to non-target organisms, including beneficial insects, pollinators, and groundwater.
 - c. Cost-Effective: Protects high-value seed and offers a strong return on investment by preventing losses, according to the **American Seed Trade Association**.
 - d. Supports Integrated Pest Management (IPM) because treated seed fits into IPM strategies, reducing overall pesticide reliance.
4. **FURTHERMORE, the neonicotinoids listed are registered by the US EPA and MDA to be safe if used according to the label, under FIFRA**, the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, a U.S. federal law administered by the EPA that regulates the sale, distribution, and use of pesticides to protect human health and the environment, requiring all pesticides to be registered and labeled by the EPA before they can be sold or used in the United States.
5. **Federal Registration means that there are no issues of safety** to humans, nor the environment, when used according to the label, either as foliar spray or in seed treatment.

Bottomline, this bill is unnecessary because 1) there is no sound premise for the actions proposed, 2) it is unwarranted due to the large fiscal cost to taxpayers, 3) the safe use of neonics is approved due to current expertise and oversight by MDA, AND 4) this ban will reduce farm economic viability, by severely reducing the sustainability of farming in Maryland. **Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with facts, not fear. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance to you.**