



Date: February 4, 2026

## **HB 91 Agriculture - Neonicotinoid Pesticides – Prohibitions**

MaGIC Position: **OPPOSED**

Committee: E&T

The Maryland Green Industries Council represents the Maryland Nursery, Landscape, Greenhouse Association, Maryland Arborist Association, The Frederick Area Landscape Contractors and Nurserymen and the Maryland Association of Green Industries. Council members provide landscape and lawn care services, tree care services, and pest control services. Members service clients in all Maryland counties and Baltimore City.

The Maryland Green Industries Council (MaGIC) respectfully opposes House Bill 91, which would ban the use of neonicotinoid pesticides for outdoor applications to turf and ornamentals. Neonicotinoids are an important and highly regulated tool used by green industry professionals as part of an integrated pest management (IPM) approach. These products are not used indiscriminately; rather, they are applied judiciously, according to pest thresholds, label requirements, and timing restrictions. Specific pests treated with neonicotinoids include grubs, borers, scale insects, and other damaging species that threaten turfgrass, ornamental plants, and trees. Eliminating this class of products removes an effective, targeted option and will likely force applicators to rely on less selective, more frequently applied alternatives that may increase overall pesticide use.

All pesticides used by MaGIC members are regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). Neonicotinoids have undergone extensive scientific review, including a pollinator-focused evaluation by EPA. As part of this process, EPA issued updated pollinator risk assessments and proposed interim registration decisions. Importantly, these proposed decisions did not impose new bans or prohibitions on labeled neonicotinoid uses for pollinator protection, reflecting EPA's determination that these products can continue to be used safely when applied according to label directions.

Maryland's green industry professionals already operate under strict state and federal requirements, including licensing, training, recordkeeping, and enforcement by the Maryland Department of Agriculture. HB91 would override this science-based regulatory framework with a broad prohibition that does not distinguish between responsible professional use and misuse, nor does it account for differences among application methods, timing, or pest targets. Since 2016, only Certified Pesticide Applicators have been authorized to apply neonicotinoid pesticides to turf and ornamentals and to our knowledge, there have not been reports of misuse or pollinator injury in Maryland.

The consequences of HB91 extend beyond the green industry. Turf and ornamental plants provide environmental benefits including erosion control, stormwater management, urban heat reduction, and improved air quality. Trees and landscapes weakened by unmanaged pests are more susceptible to disease, decline, and removal, increasing costs for homeowners, municipalities, and businesses while reducing environmental benefits across communities.

MaGIC strongly supports pollinator health and responsible pesticide stewardship. Our members routinely implement best management practices to minimize pollinator exposure, including proper timing, targeted applications, and adherence to label restrictions. However, policy decisions must be grounded in sound science and existing regulatory findings. HB91 does not reflect the conclusions of EPA's review process and would impose unnecessary harm on Maryland's green industry without delivering measurable environmental benefit.

We respectfully request your unfavorable report on House Bill 91.

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