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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 2881 Session of  
2022

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INTRODUCED BY RABB, HILL-EVANS, SAMUELSON, HOHENSTEIN, ISAACSON,  
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OCTOBER 17, 2022

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS,  
OCTOBER 17, 2022

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AN ACT

1 Establishing the Pollinator Task Force and providing for its  
2 powers and duties; and imposing duties on the Department of  
3 Agriculture.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pollinator  
8 Task Force Act.

9 Section 2. Definitions.

10 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
11 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
12 context clearly indicates otherwise:

13 "Department." The Department of Agriculture of the  
14 Commonwealth.

15 "Pollinator." A beneficial insect, domestic or wild, which  
16 is effective at pollinating plants during its life cycle.

17 "Secretary." The Secretary of Agriculture of the

1 Commonwealth.

2 "Task force." The Pollinator Task Force established under  
3 section 3(a).

4 Section 3. Pollinator Task Force.

5 (a) Establishment.--The Pollinator Task Force is established  
6 as an independent task force in which the department has primary  
7 jurisdiction.

8 (b) Purposes.--The task force shall work in collaboration  
9 with the department and other State departments and agencies,  
10 representatives of the agriculture industry, representatives of  
11 registered apiaries, representatives of academic institutions,  
12 representatives of conservation organizations and other groups  
13 to develop recommendations for supporting pollinator populations  
14 and policies and practices to promote the conservation and  
15 protection of pollinator species in this Commonwealth.

16 (c) Membership.--The task force shall consist of five  
17 members appointed in accordance with this section.

18 (d) Potential appointees.--The following individuals shall  
19 each recommend three individuals as potential appointees to the  
20 task force:

21 (1) The secretary or a designee with experience,  
22 knowledge and expertise with pollinators.

23 (2) The Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources  
24 or a designee with experience, knowledge and expertise with  
25 pollinators.

26 (3) The Secretary of Transportation or a designee with  
27 experience, knowledge and expertise with pollinators.

28 (4) A representative of the Office of Health Equity,  
29 appointed by the Secretary of Health.

30 (5) A representative of the Office of Environmental

1 Justice, appointed by the Secretary of Environmental  
2 Protection.

3 (e) List of potential appointees.--The individuals specified  
4 under subsection (d) shall develop a list of all the potential  
5 appointees developed under subsection (d) and provide the list  
6 to:

7 (1) The President pro tempore of the Senate.

8 (2) The Minority Leader of the Senate.

9 (3) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

10 (4) The Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

11 (f) Selection process.--

12 (1) Upon receiving the list of potential appointees  
13 under subsection (e), the legislative officers specified  
14 under subsection (e) shall:

15 (i) Review the list and denote their preferred  
16 choices for appointees.

17 (ii) Choose one appointee from the three potential  
18 appointees recommended by each of the five individuals  
19 specified under subsection (d), based on the results of  
20 their review and their preferred choices.

21 (2) In the event of a tie vote regarding the selection  
22 of an individual as an appointee under paragraph (1)(ii),  
23 another vote will be taken on the selection, with the  
24 following individuals making the determination:

25 (i) The legislative leaders under subsection (e).

26 (ii) The chairperson of the Agriculture and Rural  
27 Affairs Committee of the Senate.

28 (iii) The minority chairperson of the Agriculture  
29 and Rural Affairs Committee of the Senate.

30 (iv) The chairperson of the Agriculture and Rural

1 Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives.

2 (v) The minority chairperson of the Agriculture and  
3 Rural Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives.

4 (g) Officers of task force.--

5 (1) The secretary shall serve as the chairperson of the  
6 task force.

7 (2) By a majority vote, the task force may elect a vice  
8 chairperson and other officers as it deems necessary and  
9 appropriate to facilitate the work of the task force.

10 (h) Operation of task force generally.--

11 (1) The task force may adopt bylaws, rules or procedures  
12 that it deems necessary to accomplish its purposes.

13 (2) The task force shall establish rules of procedure to  
14 govern the conduct of its members.

15 (3) The department shall provide administrative support  
16 to the task force.

17 (i) Vacancy.--A vacancy on the task force shall be filled  
18 for the unexpired term of an appointed member of the task force  
19 in the same manner as the original appointment.

20 (j) Meetings.--

21 (1) Within 90 days of the effective date of this  
22 subsection, the task force shall hold its initial meeting.

23 (2) The task force shall meet at least once quarterly  
24 and shall hold other meetings as it deems necessary.

25 (k) Quorum.--

26 (1) A majority of the members of the task force shall  
27 constitute a quorum.

28 (2) Action may be taken by the task force at a meeting  
29 upon a vote of a quorum of its members present in person or  
30 through electronic means.

1 (1) Compensation and expenses.--Members of the task force  
2 shall not be entitled to compensation for their services as  
3 members but shall be entitled to reimbursement for actual and  
4 necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of official duties  
5 as members of the task force. A member of the task force shall  
6 be reimbursed in accordance with Commonwealth policy in effect  
7 for agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction.

8 (m) Records.--Meetings of the task force shall be subject to  
9 the requirements of 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open  
10 meetings).

11 Section 4. Powers and duties of task force.

12 Subject to section 5, the task force shall have the following  
13 powers and duties:

14 (1) To work in collaboration with the department and  
15 other State departments and agencies, representatives of the  
16 agriculture industry, representatives of registered apiaries,  
17 representatives of academic institutions, representatives of  
18 conservation organizations and other groups to develop  
19 recommendations for supporting pollinator populations and  
20 policies and practices to promote the conservation and  
21 protection of pollinator species in this Commonwealth.

22 (2) To coordinate the collection of information and  
23 communication-related information on programs and incentives  
24 with Federal, State and local government agencies and  
25 regulatory authorities, academic institutions and apiary,  
26 agriculture, conservation, environmental and pollinator  
27 organizations.

28 (3) To investigate and study ways to conserve and  
29 protect pollinators and strengthen pollinator populations in  
30 this Commonwealth and prepare a report that includes, at a

1 minimum, the following:

2 (i) An overview of the status of pollinator  
3 populations in this Commonwealth and the causes of  
4 population declines.

5 (ii) Recommendations regarding the following:

6 (A) Data collection and dissemination, benchmark  
7 development, targeting practices and transparency for  
8 grant making to promote the conservation and  
9 protection of pollinators in this Commonwealth.

10 (B) What practices may be applied to conserve,  
11 protect and strengthen pollinator populations in this  
12 Commonwealth.

13 (C) Ways in which laws, regulations and other  
14 policies that regulate and support the conservation  
15 and protection of pollinators in this Commonwealth  
16 could be more effectively applied.

17 (D) Ways in which programs and services offered  
18 by the department and other State departments and  
19 agencies could provide for more effective pollinator  
20 conservation and protection measures.

21 (E) Ways in which regulatory and other  
22 departmental decision-making processes could provide  
23 for more effective pollinator conservation and  
24 protection measures.

25 (F) The ongoing role of the task force in  
26 supporting the implementation and monitoring of the  
27 goals specified in this act.

28 (4) Not later than July 1, 2023, and each July 1  
29 thereafter, to prepare an annual report. The following apply:

30 (i) The report shall contain recommendations and

1 provide an update on the status of the task force's  
2 activities relative to the ways in which laws,  
3 regulations and other policies could more effectively  
4 provide for the conservation and protection of  
5 pollinators in this Commonwealth.

6 (ii) The report shall be transmitted to the  
7 following:

8 (A) The Governor.

9 (B) The department.

10 (C) The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee  
11 of the Senate.

12 (D) The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee  
13 of the House of Representatives.

14 Section 5. Access to information and records.

15 (a) Logging of information.--When the task force collects  
16 information relating to pollinators, apiaries, agriculture,  
17 conservation, pesticides, the environment or any other issue  
18 related to pollinators, the task force shall log the information  
19 and identify the Commonwealth agency providing the information.

20 (b) Right-to-Know requests.--Records relating to the task  
21 force shall be made available for access under the act of  
22 February 14, 2008 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the Right-to-Know Law.

23 Section 6. Effective date.

24 This act shall take effect in 60 days.