

**2018 -- H 8138**

LC005480

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018**

**H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N**

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT TO CONTINUE COLLABORATING WITH THE POLLINATOR WORKING GROUP ESTABLISHED TO MAKE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WITH REGARD TO MAINTAINING, PROTECTING AND ENHANCING POLLINATOR HABITAT AND HEALTH IN RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Handy, Marszalkowski, Blazejewski, McEntee, and Casimiro

Date Introduced: April 27, 2018

Referred To: House Environment and Natural Resources

1           WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) is  
2 vested with the power and duty to supervise and control the protection, development, planning  
3 and utilization of the natural resources of the state, including insects, and to promote agriculture  
4 in the state, and to regulate the registration and application of pesticides in the state; and

5           WHEREAS, In 2016, the House of Representatives created the Pollinator Working  
6 Group (PWG) to work with RIDEM on maintaining, protecting and enhancing pollinator habitat  
7 and health in Rhode Island; and

8           WHEREAS, Pollinators including bees provide invaluable ecosystems services that are  
9 crucial to wellbeing in the state; and

10           WHEREAS, Populations of pollinators including bees have been subject to stress and  
11 impairment in the United States and elsewhere to the extent that pollinator habitat and health have  
12 become matters of reasonable, significant public and environmental concern; and

13           WHEREAS, The causes of this stress and impairment may be multiple and are the  
14 subject of active, on-going studies that can yield advances in understanding of how to improve  
15 conditions and practices affecting pollinator habitat and health; and

16           WHEREAS, Rhode Island currently lacks a systematic and comprehensive assessment of  
17 such studies and advances in understanding and how they might be applied to the benefit of  
18 Rhode Island; and

1           WHEREAS, Rhode Island's state-owned properties, including state roads managed by the  
2 Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) and state parks and forests managed by  
3 RIDEM provide opportunities for enhancing habitat for pollinators; and

4           WHEREAS, The PWG reported to the Legislature and Governor on February 15, 2017,  
5 and on February 15, 2018 on:

6           (1) Developments in the scientific and technical understanding of conditions and  
7 practices affecting pollinator populations;

8           (2) Conditions and practices affecting the maintenance, protection, and enhancement of  
9 pollinator habitat and health in Rhode Island; and

10           (3) Potential costs and benefits of changing such conditions and practices; and

11           WHEREAS, The PWG made recommendations, based on its findings, to maintain,  
12 protect, and enhance pollinator health and habitat in Rhode Island; now, therefore be it

13           RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State Rhode Island and  
14 Providence Plantations hereby respectfully requests the Director of RIDEM to continue working  
15 with the PWG until March of 2021. The PWG shall be comprised of not less than seven (7) nor  
16 more than eleven (11) members, and shall include a representative of the Rhode Island Nursery  
17 and Landscape Association and the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, and between five (5) and  
18 nine (9) members appointed by the Director of RIDEM, not more than one of whom may be a  
19 representative of the Department, and which appointments shall be made with the purpose of  
20 providing for fair balance and representation of interests concerned with the issues to be  
21 considered by the working group; and be it further

22           RESOLVED, That this House hereby requests that the working group be charged with  
23 providing policy recommendations and implementation strategies to RIDEM, RIDOT, and other  
24 state agencies working on pollinator protection and health; and be it further

25           RESOLVED, That this House hereby requests that the PWG shall:

26           (a) Make findings with regard to:

27           (1) Developments in the scientific and technical understanding of conditions and  
28 practices affecting pollinator populations;

29           (2) Conditions and practices affecting the maintenance, protection, and enhancement of  
30 pollinator habitat and health in Rhode Island;

31           (3) Opportunities for expanding pollinator habitat on state owned property;

32           (4) Rhode Island's pesticide and apiary laws and regulations and training;

33           (5) Strategies to publicize and coordinate public education programs directed at pollinator  
34 health and habitat;

1 (6) Strategies to fund pollinator monitoring and habitat enhancement; and  
2 (b) Make recommendations, based on its findings, to maintain, protect, and enhance  
3 pollinator health and habitat in Rhode Island; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That this House hereby requests that the Director of RIDEM shall  
5 designate one member of the PWG to be its coordinator/presiding officer and the meetings of the  
6 working group shall be open to the public and shall be posted by RIDEM in accordance with the  
7 Open Meetings Law; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully requests the Rhode Island Nursery and  
9 Landscape Association and the Audubon Society of Rhode Island in collaboration with other  
10 members of the working group, to provide such administrative, staff and logistical support as the  
11 working group may require; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully requests that the working group  
13 provides a written report of its annual findings, progress, and recommendations to the Director of  
14 RIDEM and to the House of Representatives on or before February 15, of each year; and be it  
15 further

16 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
17 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Director of the Rhode Island Department of  
18 Environmental Management.

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