

SENATE MEMORIAL

**56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION,
2023**

INTRODUCED BY

Senator Roberto "Bobby" J. Gonzales - (D)

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE ACCEPTANCE OF A POLLINATOR PROTECTION PLAN AS PROPOSED BY THE NEW MEXICO BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION FOR THE NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, DEVELOP AND CONVENE A WORKING GROUP, THE PURPOSE OF THIS WORKING GROUP BEING TO ENHANCE POLLINATOR HEALTH THROUGH COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH, AND DATA COLLECTION.

WHEREAS, in 2014 a Presidential Memorandum was issued Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico boasts approximately 2,000 diverse pollinator species, including 300 species of butterflies and 1,400 species of bees. Habitat loss, pesticide use, diseases, invasive species, and drought are all stressors affecting New Mexico pollinators; and

WHEREAS, farmers, gardeners, land stewards, pesticide applicators and beekeepers are increasingly aware of the plight of pollinators; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico growers rely on both managed and feral populations of pollinators, honey bees being the most common.

WHEREAS, research studies show that many pollinating insect populations are in decline. (vanEngelsdorp and Meixner 2010, Fairbrother et al. 2014); and

WHEREAS, the existence or spread of bee disease and other stressors is impossible to track without data collection and reporting.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the legislature of the state of New Mexico request the New Mexico Department of Agriculture and New Mexico State University work with the New Mexico Beekeepers Association to create a Pollinator Protection Working Group; and

Be it further resolved that this working group establish ways of collecting data related to the number of both commercial and hobbyist hives in our state; and

Be it further resolved that educational material be developed based on the Pollinator Protection Plan to establish best practices for beekeepers, farmers, pesticide applicators, land stewards, and others;

Be it further resolved that this educational material contain information for beekeepers regarding how to report suspected honey bee diseases and pesticide exposure, and how to report Varroa mite counts to the Be Informed Partnership (providing data collection to our state and adding to a national data collecting effort);

Be it further resolved that a way of disseminating this material to all stakeholders be established;

Be it further resolved that this working group will update these educational materials biannually so that new research and recommendations can be incorporated;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico Beekeepers Association in collaboration with the New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture be requested to convene a working group to develop recommendations for assessing numbers of urban and rural beekeepers across the state to address numbers of hives in support of establishing an outreach and educational program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be composed of beekeepers and representatives of the New Mexico Beekeepers Association, and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this working group will develop recommendations for continual assessment of numbers of urban and rural beekeepers across the state, and to address numbers of hives in support of establishing an outreach, data gathering and educational program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group create educational materials based on the Pollinator Protection Plan regarding best practices for farmers, land stewards, pesticide applicators, and beekeepers;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be requested to report its recommendations to the

appropriate interim legislative committee by October 1, 2023; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the Director of the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, the President and Secretary of the New Mexico Beekeepers Associations, and the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative council.