

H.626 Public Comment:

Hello Representative Partridge,

I'm writing to urge support for H.626 which seeks to increase regulation of neonicotinoid pesticides. These pesticides have a well-demonstrated detrimental effect on pollinators and without pollinators, we simply have no food.

This class of pesticides is also well-known for its persistence in the soil, ability to leach into the environment, high water solubility, and potential negative health implications for non-target organisms.

The detrimental impact of neonicotinoids on bumblebees is particularly well documented. These bees are about 2-3 times more sensitive than honey bees to neonicotinoid toxicity and [Vermont's bumblebee population is already in serious decline](#). Four of Vermont's 17 bumble bee species appear to have gone extinct and the remaining populations are destined for a similar fate if we don't take swift action to prevent their demise.

Wild bees such as Vermont's native bumblebees pollinate wildflowers and most crops in Vermont, including blueberries, tomatoes, squash, and one of the state's essential commodities: apples. So even if you don't particularly have regard for the bees, themselves, please consider the economic impacts and impacts to food security and food sovereignty posed by the demise of the pollinators responsible for the production of these important crops.

I urge you to support H.626 and I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Emily Landenberger

Dear Representative Partridge:

Like many Vermonters, I spend a good amount of my time outdoors and am a keen observer of wildlife and the environment. In recent years, the decline in the species of indigenous bumblebees has become increasingly obvious—where there were once close to 21 species, these days it's rare to see anything other than the common Eastern bumblebee. These beautiful and amusing insects perform the vital function of pollinating specific local plants, and when one disappears, so does the other. Someone poetically compared native pollinators to the thread that

holds a suit of clothes together, invisible to the eye but without it the whole fabric falls apart.

There is abundant evidence that neonicotinoid-based pesticides are having a devastating effect on bees in particular, and insects in general. This will have longterm effects on agriculture and our overall environment. I urge you to support H.626 and to make sure that the Bill provides maximum protection for species diversity and the environment that will be our children's inheritance.

With best wishes,

Tony Eprile

Hello Representative Partridge. I am an environmental journalist in Bennington whose work focuses on nature-inspired solutions to global crises. I am the author of books on soil and water, I have been reporting on regenerative agriculture for several years. The more I do this work, the more I find biodiversity at the heart of our problems—and a focus for solutions.

I am writing to encourage your support for H.626, and to ensure that the Bill has teeth in it. A few years back I came to Montpelier to express my concern about the pervasiveness of neonicotinoids in the environment, noting that the American Bird Conservancy reports that a single coated seed has enough toxicity to kill a songbird. News of ecological impacts of neonics continues to get worse, even as their usage grows. For example, the chemical passes through affected insects, thereby becoming systemic through crops and harming beneficial insects. We all know that insects are essential to the functioning of ecosystems and to pollination of crops—and yet we've been allowing insect-harming chemicals into the landscape. As for pest control, biodiversity is key: for every pest insect there are 1300 insects considered beneficial. The use of neonics can cause harmful "trophic cascades", where toxicity accumulates in the predator insects and, subsequently, birds, causing harm and an imbalance in the ecosystem that can be devastating for farmers.

Please do the right thing. Vermont's nature is its wealth, and we cannot afford to squander it any longer—particularly our bees and other insects, which are the foundation for farm and ecosystem health.

Respectfully,

Judy

Judith D. Schwartz