

2017 -- H 6256

LC002742

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

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: Representative Arthur Handy

Date Introduced: May 26, 2017

Referred To: House Environment and Natural Resources

1 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management is invested
2 with the power and duty to supervise and control the protection, development, planning and
3 utilization of the natural resources of the state, including insects, and to promote agriculture in the
4 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 to work with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management on maintaining,
7 protecting and enhancing pollinator habitat 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, The Pollinator Working Group reported to the Legislature and Governor on
2 February 15, 2017, on:

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

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

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

8 WHEREAS, The Pollinator Working Group made recommendations, based on its
9 findings, to maintain, protect, and enhance pollinator health and habitat in Rhode Island; now,
10 therefore be it;

11 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State Rhode Island and
12 Providence Plantations hereby respectfully requests the Director of the Department of
13 Environmental Management to continue working with the Pollinator Working Group which shall
14 be comprised of not less than seven nor more than eleven members, and shall include a
15 representative of the Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Association and the Audubon Society
16 of Rhode Island, and between five and nine members appointed by the Director, not more than
17 one of whom may be a representative of the Department, and which appointments shall be made
18 with the purpose of providing for fair balance and representation of interests concerned with the
19 issues to be considered by the working group; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That this House hereby requests that the working group be charged with
21 providing policy recommendations and implementation strategies to the Department of
22 Environmental Management, Department of Transportation and other state agencies working on
23 pollinator protection and health; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That this House hereby requests that the Working Group shall:

25 (a) Make findings with regard to:

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

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

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

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

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

34 (6) Strategies to fund pollinator monitoring and habitat enhancement; and

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

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

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

11 RESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully requests that the working group
12 provides a written report of its year two findings and recommendations to the Director and to the
13 House of Representatives on or before February 15, 2018; and be it further

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

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