

HOUSE No. 4562

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, April 22, 2024.

The committee on Environment and Natural Resources, to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 843) of Mary S. Keefe and others for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to opportunities for improving pollinator health, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4562) ought to pass.

For the committee,

DANIEL CAHILL.

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act to protect pollinator habitat.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Section 1. (a) There shall be a special commission established to study statewide
2 opportunities for improving pollinator health by increasing and enhancing native pollinator
3 habitat. The commission shall focus on identifying statewide opportunities for enhancing and
4 expanding pollinator habitat in both developed and natural areas such as farm field borders,
5 forest borders, residential areas, parks, urban areas, industrial areas, energy transmission
6 corridors, energy generating facilities and transportation corridors. The commission shall
7 consider enhancing and expanding pollinator habitat for a broad range of native and managed
8 pollinators including but not limited to wild and managed bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, ants,
9 bats and birds. The commission shall report its findings, including any proposed legislation, to
10 the house and senate committees on ways and means, and the joint committee on environment
11 and natural resources no later than May 1, 2025.

12 The commission shall consist of 11 members including: 1 member of the house of
13 representatives, without a designating party; 1 member of the senate, without a designating party;
14 the secretary of energy and environmental affairs or a designee, who shall serve as chair; the

15 commissioner of the division of fisheries and wildlife, or a designee; the commissioner of the
16 department of agricultural resources, or a designee; and 6 members appointed by the governor: 1
17 of whom shall be a university of massachusetts faculty member specializing in the science of
18 pollinator health; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the university of massachusetts
19 extension with knowledge in crops which rely on pollinators and pollinator health; 1 of whom
20 shall represent an advocacy group for farmers; 1 of whom shall be a beekeeper representing a
21 regional or statewide beekeeping organization; 1 of whom shall represent an advocacy group for
22 nurseries; and 1 of whom shall represent a membership based non-profit advocacy group
23 dedicated to land protection.

24 (b) The special commission shall examine issues relevant to pollinator health, including:
25 (i) identifying current laws and regulations in the commonwealth and other states and countries
26 related to protecting pollinators and pollinator health; (ii) studying public education and outreach
27 plans regarding pollinator habitat that have been successful in other states; (iii) identifying
28 adequacy of funding for efforts to promote or protect pollinator habitat; (iv) investigating the
29 means used by other states to gather data on populations of pollinators; (v) evaluating existing
30 best management practices for promoting pollinator health including, but not limited to, foraging
31 and proper food source diversity; (vi) studying the use of agricultural and nonagricultural lands,
32 such as transportation corridors, energy transmission corridors, parks, and working forests, and
33 how they may be used to provide pollinator forage and unique opportunities to increase
34 pollinator populations; (vii) research and identify ways to expand and coordinate public
35 education programs outlining steps individuals and businesses can take to help address the loss
36 of pollinator habitat.