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New Pollinator Bill Helps Pesticide Industry, Not Bees or Beekeepers

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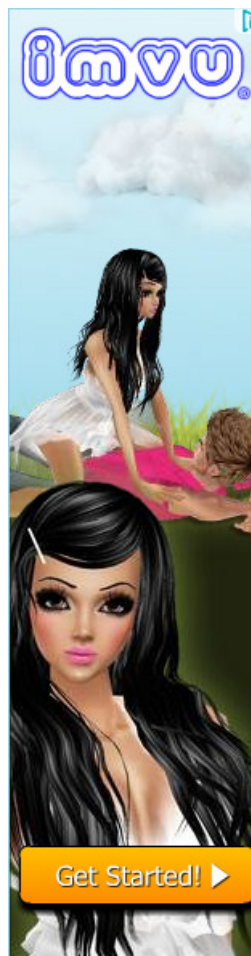


Washington, DC--(ENEWSPF)--September 12, 2014. Center for Food Safety today expressed concerns with a bill that could derail positive efforts already underway in Congress and the White House to improve pollinator health. The purposefully narrow and limiting bill, H.R. 5447, was introduced by Rep. Austin Scott (R-Ga.) and would amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) to push for faster approval of pesticides to control “parasitic pests,” such as the varroa mite.

“Fast-tracking pesticide approvals is what got us into this mess in the first place and focusing strictly on varroa mites will not get us out,” said Larissa Walker, pollinator campaign director for Center for Food Safety. “Congress cannot ignore every other key factor in pollinator declines, particularly the pesticides known to damage their health, and expect to solve this crisis.”

While varroa mites are one of several factors impacting honey bee health, beekeepers and scientists have consistently pointed a finger at pesticides such as neonicotinoids as a primary culprit in honey bee and other pollinator declines.

“There is already a robust bill in Congress, with support from beekeepers, aimed at addressing the full spectrum of stressors impacting pollinator health. It would be a shame if this new bill distracted attention away from it and let the pesticide industry off the hook,” said Colin O’Neil, director of government affairs.



In April, a House Agriculture Subcommittee held a **hearing solely focused on varroa**. The panel of witnesses included a representative of Bayer but no one from the beekeeping industry. Beekeepers have been adamant in their demands to curtail pesticide use in order to preserve their industry and protect the food supply.

"Beekeepers do not consider mites as the top problem, and many like myself find it a non-issue. Pesticides are still the number one issue for all beekeepers," said New York beekeeper Jim Doan.

Speaking at the hearing, USDA official Jeff Pettis **testified**, "But even if the varroa mite problem were solved today, this would not by itself solve all of the problems facing honey bees and beekeepers."

In July 2013, Representatives John Conyers and Earl Blumenauer introduced the "Saving America's Pollinators Act," (HR 2692), which would suspend the use of four of the most toxic neonicotinoid chemicals until the Environmental Protection Agency conducts a full review of their safety and can make an informed and scientifically-sound decision about their use.

In June, the White House released instructions to all federal agencies spelling out a comprehensive plan to deal with the urgent crisis facing honey bees and other pollinators. The memorandum specifically called on EPA to assess the risks of pesticides, particularly neonicotinoids.

For more on the history of neonicotinoids and the problems with EPA's approval process, go **here**.

Source: <http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org>



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NORAHG RESPONDS TO NON-EXPERT BEE LOBBYISTS — BLISSFULLY UNAWARE THAT VARROA MITES ARE PROBLEM NO. 1

In America, Larissa Walker, NON-EXPERT LOBBYIST for Center For Food Safety. is WRONG ! Bee-keepers appear to be unable or unwilling to get their major pest problems under control, such as varroa mites, leading observers to conclude that bee-keepers may not be competent to handle their businesses, and may be wholly unsuited to be raising bees. Dr Ernesto Guzman, a bee researcher at the University of Guelph, in Ontario, says varroa mites continue to be the prime suspect in the bee losses. According to Dr Guzman — « we have evidence that varroa mites are problem no. 1 associated to bee mortality in southern Ontario, although neonicotinoid insecticides have been associated to some isolated cases of colony mortality ». Dr Guzman was never consulted by non-expert lobbyists like Walker, who nevertheless conspire to prohibit against neonicotinoid insecticides used in the agriculture industry. Even Alberta Bee-Keepers Commission does not consider neonicotinoid insecticides as a serious problem. According to Alberta Bee-Keepers Commission, varroa mites are the cause of roughly half of bee losses every winter. If varroa mites infest even one per cent of bees, within two years, the entire hive could be lost. Bee-keepers must get their varroa mite problems under control to rein in the collapse of bee colonies. Moreover, the weight of the scientific evidence clearly shows that neonicotinoid insecticides do not affect bees. The exposure of bees to neonicotinoid insecticides is at very low levels, far too low to cause harmful effects. Neonicotinoid insecticides will cause no harm to bees since treated plant tissues contain only tiny amounts of ingredient, bees are not feeding on the plants, and pollen contains barely detectable levels. If non-expert lobbyists like Walker were not so scientifically illiterate, they would know that scientific research shows that, as reported through EPA's and Health Canada's vast toxicology database, no harm will occur to bees. Neonicotinoid insecticides have been thoroughly assessed by Health Canada to ensure they can be used safely without harming bees. If we had less conventional neonicotinoid use in the environment, we would still have bee colony collapse disorder, because many bee-keepers are not competent to manage their hives. PROHIBITION WILL NOT SAVE BEES. <http://tinyurl.com/pxqzh6m> For the whole truth regarding VARROA MITES, go to The Pesticide Truths Web-Site ... <http://tinyurl.com/ktw2wwn> <http://wp.me/p1jq40-7OD> <http://wp.me/p1jq40-6WJ> <http://wp.me/p1jq40-70c> <http://tinyurl.com/lmbsef2> <http://tinyurl.com/qzjr6sm> NORAHG is the National Organization Responding Against HUJE that seek to destroy the Green space industry. WILLIAM H GATHERCOLE AND NORAH G Get the latest details at <http://pesticidettruths.com/> <http://pesticidettruths.com/toc/> <http://wp.me/P1jq40-2rr> <https://www.facebook.com/norah.gfon>

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Diane Dixon

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