



Interreligious Eco-Justice Network
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Terri Eickel

Environment Committee

RE: HB 6916, An Act Concerning the Use of Neonicotinoids

Dear. Senator Lopes, Representative Parker and members of the Environment Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network, a faith-based environmental organization in Connecticut. We work with religious communities on environmental issues such as climate change, air and water pollution, toxic chemicals, and biodiversity loss. I am submitting this on behalf of the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network's and its members.

One of IREJN's programs is to provide support, expertise, and small grants to congregations for the installation or expansion of pollinator or vegetable gardens. Some of the congregations we have supported include St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church in New Haven, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Ridgefield, Grace and St. John's in Hamden, St. Anthony of Padua in Fairfield, Congregational Church in North Stonington, and North United Methodist Church in Hartford. These are just a few of the houses of worship that are engaging in organic gardening to either provide fresh produce for people in need or habitat for the wildlife that we all need to thrive.

Across the state, people of faith are taking steps to live as stewards of the planet.

On behalf of the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network, I would like to urge you to support **HB 6916, An Act Concerning the Use of Neonicotinoids.**

Neonicotinoids are a class of pesticides that have been typically used for grub control. Unfortunately, neonicotinoids are poisonous to insects, pollinators, birds, and people, and they contaminate our water supply.

IREJN feels strongly that we need to ban neonicotinoids – there are effective alternatives on the market and the damage the neonicotinoids are causing to our fragile eco-systems and wildlife is too significant to ignore. Faith traditions speak consistently of the need to protect wildlife and to treat it with respect and compassion.

We are also in strong support of the inclusion of three types of neonicotinoid-coated seeds in this ban. The coating for wheat, corn, and soy has not been shown to increase yield, but one neonicotinoid-coated seed is enough to kill a songbird.

I know every bird in the mountains, and the insects in the fields are mine. Psalm 50:11

Do you not see that all that is in the heavens and the earth, even the birds that go about spreading their wings in flight, extol His glory? Each knows the way of its prayer and of its extolling Allah's glory. Allah is well aware of whatever they do" (Quran 24:41)

"Let him not destroy, or cause to be destroyed, any life at all, nor sanction the acts of those who do so". Sutta-Nipata

He who does not seek to kill, cause pain or tie up living creatures and desires the good of all attains everlasting joy. — Vishnu Dharma Sutra 51.69

We ask that the Environment Committee support HB 6916, An Act Concerning the Use of Neonicotinoids.

Very best regards,

Terri Eickel, *Executive Director*

Interreligious Eco-Justice Network