



**Before the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee
House Bill 649 – Pollinators Week
Sponsor Testimony by Representative Michael J. Skindell
November 15, 2022**

Chairman Koehler, Vice Chairman Creech, Ranking Member Brent, and Members of the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to join with my joint sponsor Representative Lightbody to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 649.

This legislation designates the last full week of June in Ohio as “Pollinator Week” to coincide with the national Pollinator week. H.B. 649 is designed to bring attention to the urgent issue of declining pollinator populations, such as bees, birds, butterflies, bats, beetles, moths, wasps, and flies. The designation would help promote pollinator health and recognize the importance of pollinators to our ecosystems and their value to the economy.

Often pollinators go unrecognized even though they are essential to the sustainability of our environment. As various factors, such as loss of habitat, climate change, use of damaging pesticides and pollution worsen, pollinators become increasingly more at risk.

According to the National Park Service, pollinators are responsible for bringing us one out of every three bites of food. It is also important to note that 75 percent of all flowering plants on earth are pollinated by insects and animals, which amounts to more than 1,200 food crops and 180,000 different varieties of plants.¹

Furthermore, pollinators are essential to our economy. Our agriculture sector could be drastically at risk if we do not start taking the necessary measures now to protect our pollinators.

Without healthy pollinators, we risk damaging our environment and our ecosystem. Recognizing this important week brings us one step closer to protecting our pollinators by spreading awareness of their vital functions and duties.

Chairman Koehler, Vice Chairman Creech, Ranking Member Brent, and Members of the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee, thank you for your consideration of House Bill 649. We would be happy to answer any of your questions.

¹ National Park Service, June 8, 2018- “What is a pollinator”