

**Assembly Joint Resolution**

**No. 29**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Allen**  
(Principal coauthor: Senator Leno)

February 24, 2012

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Assembly Joint Resolution No. 29—Relative to honeybees.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 29, as introduced, Allen. Pollinators.

This measure would urge the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation to act expeditiously to protect pollinators, especially honeybees, by prohibiting the use, marketing, or sale of neonicotinoid products deemed hazardous to pollinators.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1     WHEREAS, Agriculture is a major industry in California, with  
2 a direct connection to 1 in every 10 jobs; and  
3     WHEREAS, Since the early 20th Century, migratory beekeepers  
4 have provided a critical service to the United States and California  
5 economies, pollinating a wide variety of high value crops, including  
6 almonds, cherries, and apples; and  
7     WHEREAS, Honeybees are the most economically valuable  
8 pollinator in the United States, adding well over \$15 billion in  
9 economic value to agriculture each year; and  
10    WHEREAS, One in three bites of food we eat is dependent on  
11 honeybees for pollination; and

1 WHEREAS, California is responsible for more than half the  
2 world's almond production, and approximately 1.3 to 1.5 million  
3 honeybee colonies are rented for almond pollination alone; and

4 WHEREAS, In 2006, honeybees in the United States began  
5 disappearing in large numbers, a term coined "colony collapse  
6 disorder"; and

7 WHEREAS, Multiple, interacting causes are likely contributors  
8 to "colony collapse disorder," including pathogens, habitat loss,  
9 and pesticides; and

10 WHEREAS, Immune system damage is a critical factor that may  
11 be at the root of the disorder; and

12 WHEREAS, Each year since 2006, commercial beekeepers have  
13 reported annual losses of 26-36 percent, more than double what  
14 is considered normal; and

15 WHEREAS, Honeybees are a keystone indicator species and  
16 their decline points to broader environmental degradation.  
17 Pollinator population declines are thus a disproportionately  
18 important piece of the current collapse in biodiversity that 7 in 10  
19 biologists believe poses an even greater threat to humanity than  
20 the global warming which contributes to it; and

21 WHEREAS, The United States Environmental Protection Agency  
22 (EPA) has identified a newer class of systemic, neurotoxic  
23 pesticides called neonicotinoids, and especially the products  
24 containing imidacloprid, clothianidin, thiamethoxin, as being highly  
25 toxic to honeybees; and

26 WHEREAS, Bayer CropScience recently announced the removal  
27 of almonds from the pesticide label for imidacloprid products in  
28 California, thereby eliminating the use of the product in almond  
29 orchards, in response to concerns by the scientific community  
30 about the product's impacts on honeybees; and

31 WHEREAS, Both the EPA and the California Department of  
32 Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) are tasked with evaluating the threat  
33 of pesticides to pollinators before they are marketed in California.  
34 However, these agencies have relied on industry studies and failed  
35 to adequately study problems with pesticides as they arise in the  
36 field; and

37 WHEREAS, Governments in Italy, Germany, France, and  
38 elsewhere have already taken action to protect pollinators from  
39 neonicotinoids, and the State of New York has already banned  
40 neonicotinoid products; now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*  
2 *California, jointly, That the Legislature urges the EPA and the*  
3 *CDPR to act expeditiously to protect pollinators, and especially*  
4 *honeybees, by prohibiting the use, marketing, or sale of*  
5 *neonicotinoid products deemed hazardous to pollinators; and be*  
6 *it further*

7 *Resolved, That the Legislature urges the EPA and the CDPR to*  
8 *create a clear timeline and plan of action for addressing pesticides*  
9 *that pose harm to pollinators, especially neonicotinoids; and be it*  
10 *further*

11 *Resolved, That the Legislature urges the CDPR, and the*  
12 *California Department of Food and Agriculture, to promote healthy*  
13 *environments for all pollinators through existing programs and*  
14 *new funding opportunities; and be it further*

15 *Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies*  
16 *of this resolution to the office of the Governor, the Secretary of*  
17 *the Senate, and the author for appropriate distribution.*