



August 23, 2021

Re: comments on proposed Pesticide Ordinance O30.094

Dear Stamford Board of Representatives,

I am writing on behalf of the Pollinator Pathway Northeast--a coalition of over 250 towns and thousands of citizens across the region, including Stamford and 86 other towns in Connecticut--in strong support of Pesticide Ordinance O30.094.

The Pollinator Pathway encourages the planting of native plants and the avoidance of pesticides in order to restore safe habitat for declining populations of pollinators. This group has taken shape in response to reports of an "insect apocalypse" (New York Times, 2019) supported by studies that show

- Monarch populations are down 90% in the last 20 years, *National Wildlife Federation*
- A 30% overwinter colony loss annually for honey bees over the last 10 years, *USDA*
- North American bumble bee declines to 96 percent, *University of Illinois*.
- A 76% decline in **all flying insects** since 1989 in a longitudinal German study, *Krefeld Entomological Society, Dusseldorf*

Stamford has been a leader in our state in helping connect the Pollinator Pathway, and the message the city will send by passing this ordinance will carry enormous weight regionally. The city of Montreal just passed an ordinance that bans use of synthetic pesticides entirely, on public and private properties, with some exceptions (more information here: <https://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/montreal-unveils-new-bylaw-banning-pesticides>). This sort of action is the future, and we applaud Stamford's forward-looking leadership.

Cornell just released a report that looked at 1100 studies on the effects of neonicotinoids which showed the pesticides to be harmful, not only to bees, but also to birds, aquatic insects, fish, and mammals including humans (<https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/pollinator-research-cornell/neonicotinoid-report/>). Neonics are contributing to ecosystem collapse (more information in this NRDC report: <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/bigger-than-bees->

[neonics-new-york-report.pdf](#)), and as the Cornell report shows, their benefits fail to outweigh costs for farmers. New York and New Jersey have bills to ban neonics pending now (which go beyond Connecticut's retail sales ban), the EPA has finally banned chlorpyrifos, known to damage children's developing brains, and Bayer will end residential use of Round Up by 2023 (a product already banned in 20 countries). These actions are encouraging, but Stamford's move to ban the use of synthetic pesticides broadly makes much more sense than targeting individual poisons, or classes of poisons, one at a time.

The public supports safer lawns and water and more birds and bees. Thank you for leading by example, standing up to the chemical industry lobby, and taking the important step of passing this ordinance to protect the environment and human health.

Sincerely,

Louise Washer
Pollinator Pathway Steering Committee