

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 19th, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

We are writing to express our significant concern regarding the recently passed State Senate bill, S.1856A, which unscientifically prohibits the sale of 80-90% of neonicotinoid pesticides (neonics) that are currently used to protect corn, soybean, and wheat seeds from harmful insects¹. This legislation is a step backwards for farmers, threatening to increase their pesticide costs and reduce their yields at a time when they are already financially squeezed by rising energy and labor costs. It would force them to revert to the use of older, more harmful pesticides and spray a larger portion of crops, risking environmental damage to our communities and waterways. Thus, we ask you to immediately veto this harmful legislation and stand with our rural communities and agricultural producers.

Neonics pesticides play a crucial role in modern agriculture, providing farmers an effective means of pest control. These pesticides are extensively researched and have been approved for use by regulatory bodies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The decision to ban them outright based on data from a single study disregards the scientific evidence and expertise that led to their approval in the first place. If enacted, this ban could increase pesticide application rates an estimated 375% per acre². Additionally, the elimination of these pesticides will lead to higher carbon emissions and soil erosion, as farmers will be forced to increase tillage to combat harmful pests.

The impetus of this bill is a 2020 Cornell study that claims neonics pose a threat to New York's bee population while providing little benefits to farmers. However, it is important to note that these findings are still debated among scientists, and there is no consensus on the extent of the impact of neonics on the State's bee population. Banning these pesticides prematurely would disregard ongoing research and hinder our ability to implement evidence-based policies to protect our environment and farmers.

In the face of the high energy costs, labor costs, and regulations affecting New York farmers and producers, we condemn this attack on our agricultural economy. Any regulation on farming practices should be based on broad scientific consensus with full input from our farmers and rural communities. We therefore ask you to veto S.1856A to avoid the additional disastrous

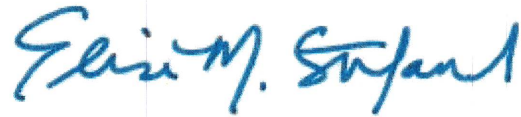
¹ https://legacy-assets.eenews.net/open_files/assets/2020/07/08/document_gw_15.pdf

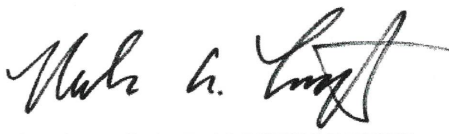
² https://aginfomatics.com/uploads/3/4/2/2/34223974/executive_summary_neonicotinoids.pdf

impacts this rushed, broad, and sweeping legislation will have on our rural communities and the entire New York State economy.

Sincerely,


CLAUDIA TENNEY
Member of Congress


ELISE STEFANIK
Member of Congress


NICHOLAS A. LANGWORTHY
Member of Congress


GEORGE SANTOS
Member of Congress