



ENVIRONMENTAL
— JUSTICE LEAGUE —

September 2, 2022

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor
State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, California

**RE: Request for Signature
Assembly Bill 2146 (Bauer-Kahan) -- Neonicotinoid Pesticides**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the California Environmental Justice League, I respectfully request your signature on Assembly Bill 2146. This important measure is an critical first step in addressing the clear and present danger that neonicotinoids pose to our environment in general and our food chain in particular.

For over a decade, researchers have provided the federal government with compelling scientific evidence that neonicotinoids pose a lethal danger not merely to those insects considered “pests” that can decimate food crops, but also to honey bees, a species we are dependent upon for the effective pollination of a great majority of our food crops not merely in California, but throughout in North America.

In addition to being deadly, neonicotinoids have compromised honey bees’ contribution to our ecosystem in other ways. This family of pesticides has been scientifically documented as damaging honey bees’ ability to navigate, rendering them unable to find their way back to their hives. Those it does not kill, it often renders sterile. If unchecked, the harm inflicted on this species will have catastrophic effects on future food sources throughout North America.

Despite mounting, incontrovertible and alarming evidence of the decline in the honey bee population on this continent since the introduction of neonicotinoids, a decline some researchers estimate to be in excess of seventy percent, the U.S. Department of Food and

Agriculture has been slow to act, and recently issued a ruling that it would not take final action to *potentially* broadly restrict neonicotinoids until 2024.

Your action on this legislation is all the more vital in light of the relatively weak response of the federal government to a clear and present danger to future food supplies. If the federal government cannot or will not take timely action, it falls upon California to take a leadership role in taking the first step to protect our regional environment and our food chain. This action will no doubt inspire other states to follow suit, and signal to the nation the direction in which it needs to move on this critical issue.

Additional evidence has been brought forward in recent weeks that neonicotinoids pose a health hazard to certain species of North American birds, so the full scope of lethality of this family of pesticides has yet to be determined, but it is not strictly limited to insects.

I am enclosing for your review an article we published in July 2021 detailing news accounts going back a full decade, documenting the scientific evidence of the dangers of this family of pesticides.

We are pleased to support this measure, and respectfully request your signature upon it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Cromartie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Tim Cromartie
Policy Director

cc: Assembly Member Rebecca Bauer-Kahan