

ASSEMBLY, No. 2125

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman P. CHRISTOPHER TULLY

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

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District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblywoman LISA SWAIN

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Space and Assemblywoman Downey

SYNOPSIS

Creates “Pollinator Pathway” designation for municipalities.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** creating a “Pollinator Pathway” designation for
2 municipalities and supplementing Title 13 of the Revised
3 Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that pollinators, such as
9 bats, bees, birds, and butterflies, play a vital role in the production
10 of New Jersey’s most popular crops, including apples, blueberries,
11 cranberries, cucumbers, pumpkins, and squash; that pollinators are
12 essential for the maintenance of healthy, biodiverse ecosystems,
13 including the State’s forests and grasslands, which provide habitat
14 to many species of animals, as well as natural resources and
15 recreational opportunities for residents; and that over 80 percent of
16 all flowering plants on earth are animal-pollinated.

17 The Legislature further finds and declares that pollinators are in
18 serious decline in New Jersey and worldwide; that this decline
19 threatens the State’s food supply, its natural ecosystems and
20 biodiversity, and, thus, the health and well-being of New Jersey
21 residents; that the main causes for the decline in pollinator numbers
22 are climate change, pollution, the widespread application of
23 pesticides and herbicides on lawns and crops, the loss of pollinator
24 habitat due to development and fragmentation and degradation of
25 the State’s natural areas, and the introduction of non-native invasive
26 plant species.

27 The Legislature therefore determines that it is in the public
28 interest to encourage and promote the development of pollinator
29 pathways –corridors of public and private land that provide native
30 plant habitat and nutrition for pollinators. The establishment of
31 such pathways will help ensure a better harvest for farmers, protect
32 the State’s ecosystems and biodiversity, promote healthier lawns
33 and public spaces and reduce mowing and maintenance costs, and
34 promote community involvement in the protection of pollinators.

35
36 2. a. The Commissioner of Environmental Protection, in
37 consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall, within the
38 availability of funds, establish a “Pollinator Pathway” designation
39 for municipalities that meet the standards established therefor by
40 the Department of Environmental Protection pursuant to subsection
41 b. of this section.

42 b. The standards for a municipal “Pollinator Pathway”
43 designation shall include, but need not be limited to:

- 44 (1) Providing a habitat area for pollinators;
45 (2) Providing host plants which shall include at least one of the
46 following to support at least six butterfly species:
47 (a) *Asclepias syriaca*;
48 (b) *Asclepias incarnate*;
49 (c) *Asclepias tuberosa*;

- 1 (d) *Asclepias verticillata*;
- 2 (e) *Asclepias exaltata*;
- 3 (f) *Asclepias purpurascens*;
- 4 (g) *Asclepias viridiflora*;
- 5 (h) *Asclepias lanceolate*;
- 6 (i) *Asclepias quadrifolia*;
- 7 (j) *Asclepias rubra*;
- 8 (k) *Asclepias variegata*; or
- 9 (l) *Asclepias amplexicaulis*;
- 10 (3) Providing at least four nectar sources for pollinators during
- 11 the seasons of spring, summer, and fall;
- 12 (4) Providing an appropriate water source and shelter for
- 13 pollinators, and a basking site for butterflies; and
- 14 (5) Incorporating at least five of the conservation practices
- 15 enumerated in subsection c. of this section.
- 16 c. To meet the standards for designation as a “Pollinator
- 17 Pathway,” a municipality shall incorporate at least five of the
- 18 following conservation practices: (1) removing invasive plants; (2)
- 19 composting yard and food waste; (3) avoiding the use of chemical
- 20 pesticides, herbicides, or insecticides to the greatest extent possible;
- 21 (4) controlling pests naturally by encouraging and facilitating the
- 22 use of beneficial insects; (5) using drip or soaker hoses instead of
- 23 an overhead sprinkler system for irrigating plants; (6) using a rain
- 24 barrel or other means of capturing rainwater to irrigate plants; (7)
- 25 directing downspouts and gutters to drain onto the lawn, plant beds,
- 26 or retention, detention, and other containment areas; (8) maintaining
- 27 a layer of organic mulch over tree roots, shrubs, and plant beds; (9)
- 28 replacing non-native and invasive plants with low maintenance
- 29 native plants; (10) planting groundcovers or using mulch on thinly
- 30 vegetated areas to decrease erosion; (11) reducing or eliminating
- 31 lawn areas; (12) eliminating the use of chemical fertilizers and
- 32 using instead natural fertilizers, such as compost and manure; or
- 33 (13) reducing maintenance costs by reducing mowing.
- 34 d. After establishing the program logo design pursuant to
- 35 section 3 of this act, the department shall provide a “Pollinator
- 36 Pathway” designation sign or signs for outdoor use by any
- 37 municipality that meets the designation requirements provided by
- 38 the department.
- 39 e. As used in this section:
- 40 “Host plant” means a plant which aids and shelters a butterfly in
- 41 its growth by providing a site for the butterfly to lay eggs and food
- 42 for an emerging caterpillar.
- 43 “Pollinator” means any bee, butterfly, moth, wasp, fly, beetle,
- 44 ant, hummingbird, bat, or other animal that is known to pollinate
- 45 plants.
- 46
- 47 3. The department shall develop and promote a Statewide
- 48 contest, to be conducted every 10 years, for a program logo design
- 49 for the “Pollinator Pathway” designation sign. The department, in

1 consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall establish
2 application guidelines for an entry and shall solicit input from the
3 general public prior to announcing the winning design entry of the
4 contest. The department shall decide the winning design and use it
5 as the “Pollinator Pathway” designation sign for a period of 10
6 years.

7
8 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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11 STATEMENT

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13 This bill would require the Commissioner of Environmental
14 Protection, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, to
15 establish a “Pollinator Pathway” designation for municipalities that
16 meet the standards established by the Department of Environmental
17 Protection. The standards for a municipal “Pollinator Pathway”
18 designation would include, but need not be limited to:

19 (1) Providing a habitat area for pollinators;

20 (2) Providing host plants which shall include at least one of the
21 following to support at least six butterfly species:

22 (a) *Asclepias syriaca*;

23 (b) *Asclepias incarnate*;

24 (c) *Asclepias tuberosa*;

25 (d) *Asclepias verticillata*;

26 (e) *Asclepias exaltata*;

27 (f) *Asclepias purpurascens*;

28 (g) *Asclepias viridiflora*;

29 (h) *Asclepias lanceolate*;

30 (i) *Asclepias quadrifolia*;

31 (j) *Asclepias rubra*;

32 (k) *Asclepias variegata*; or

33 (l) *Asclepias amplexicaulis*;

34 (3) Providing at least four nectar sources for pollinators during the
35 seasons of spring, summer, and fall;

36 (4) Providing an appropriate water source and shelter for
37 pollinators, and a basking site for butterflies; and

38 (5) Incorporating at least five of the conservation practices from
39 subsection c. of section 1 of the bill.

40 Under the bill, the department would develop and promote a
41 Statewide contest for the establishment of a program logo design for
42 the “Pollinator Pathway” designation sign, to be conducted every 10
43 years, and would solicit input from the general public prior to
44 announcing the winning design. After the establishment of a program
45 logo, the department would provide a “Pollinator Pathway”
46 designation sign or signs for outdoor use by any municipality that
47 meets the designation requirements.