

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 26, 2010

The Honorable Herb Kohl
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Committee on Appropriations
SD-131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sam Brownback
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Committee on Appropriations
SD-131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 2051

Dear Chairman Kohl and Ranking Member Brownback:

We are writing to request that the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee allocate \$20 million in Fiscal Year 2011 funding for pollinator research projects as authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill. These funds will increase the resilience and security of our farming systems by supporting vital research into Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) in managed honeybees and native bee ecology.

The USDA starkly warned in June 2007 that the continued decline in bees and emergence of CCD "has the potential to cause a \$15 billion direct loss of crop production and \$75 billion in indirect losses." Pollinators are responsible for the production of one-third of the nation's food supply, yet Federal support of pollinator and honeybee research has been historically irreflexive of the importance of animal pollinators in agriculture.

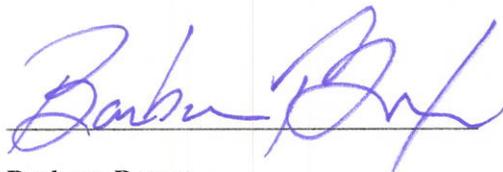
We often take for granted the indispensable services honeybees and other pollinators provide. The number of managed honeybee colonies in the U.S. has dropped in half since 1940, while demand for pollination services in agriculture has continued to grow. This year over 1.5 million managed honey bee hives are expected to be needed for California almond crop alone—over half the hives in the entire nation. In other states, farmers who produce other nuts, apples, berries, peaches, squash, and many fruits and vegetables depend on healthy pollinators.

Because of the importance of pollinators in the production of the nation's food supply and their impact on the stability of our agricultural economy, it is essential that the Federal government help establish sustainable, long-term, research initiatives dedicated to protecting the health of both honeybees and other native bees.

With broad consensus from farmers, beekeepers, scientists and legislators on the need to fund pollinator research, this investment will allow our scientific community to pursue vital investigations into the complex natural systems on which our nation's agricultural activities are dependant.

We thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer



Tim Johnson

Maria Cantwell

Maria Cantwell

Ron Wyden

Ron Wyden

Dianne Feinstein

Dianne Feinstein

Kristen E. Gillibrand

Kristen E. Gillibrand

Mike Crapo

Mike Crapo

Robert Menendez

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Patrick Leahy

Patrick J. Leahy

Jeff Merkley

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Debbie Stabenow

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Kent Conrad

Kent Conrad

Roland W. Burris

Roland W. Burris

Carl Levin

Carl Levin

Bob Casey, Jr.

Robert P. Casey Jr.

Daniel K. Akaka

Daniel K. Akaka