

RESOLUTION NO. 123

A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH ALBANY COUNTY AS A POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY MUNICIPALITY

Introduced: 3/11/19

By: Messrs. Bullock, Ms. Lekakis and Cunningham, Messrs. Reinhardt, Touchette, Ms. Plotsky, Messrs. Ethier, Simpson and Miller:

WHEREAS, Albany County has a history of protecting rare and endangered invertebrates such as the Karner Blue Butterfly, which has been brought back to healthy population from the brink of extinction, and

WHEREAS, the recent swift and dramatic global declines in insect populations forces us to face the reality that humans are entirely dependent upon pollinators in our gardens, crops, food chain and ecosystems, making it necessary to continue our commitment to their protection, and

WHEREAS, there are now eight (8) endangered species of bees in the United States, one of which, the Rusty Patched Bumblebee, was native to Albany County, and

WHEREAS, recent research data has recorded dramatic insect declines globally, estimates from one 2014 study found that there has been a forty-five percent (45%) drop in the abundance of invertebrates, a majority of which are insects, and

WHEREAS, neonicotinoid pesticides remain in the pollen and nectar of plants for thirty-six (36) month, causing neurotoxic effects on visiting insects, and

WHEREAS, neonicotinoids have been found to be more toxic than other pesticides to bees, and

WHEREAS, declines of insectivorous (a diet of insects, worms and other invertebrates) birds have been documented as high as thirty-three percent (33%) decline since the 1970's, the most rapid drop in population in any bird group, and

WHEREAS, Albany County has been a leader in protecting our partners in agriculture, wildlife and conservation, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Albany County is hereby declared a Pollinator Friendly County, and be it further,

RESOLVED, that Albany County shall, to the extent practicable, establish host plants and nectar plant species for local pollinators – butterflies, moths, bee species and other flying insect species – along all County properties and County parks, and be it further,

RESOLVED, that Albany County shall take measures to restore and increase habitat to include native plants with succession blooming, aiming for pollen and nectar along County roads whenever such roads are reconstructed or repaved, and be it further

RESOLVED, shall conduct an inventory of all pesticides being used by Albany County, and make efforts to phase out the use of neonicotinoid pesticides in favor of lesser toxic methods as part of an Integrated Pest Management System plan promoting pollinator friendly practices, and be it further

RESOLVED, that Albany County will publish guides to pollinator host and nectar plants native to this region for gardeners to refer to, and to local neonicotinoid free organic farms and Community Supported Agriculture greenhouses, sellers of untreated organic seeds in an effort to encourage consumers and gardeners to support pollinator-friendly practices, and be it further

RESOLVED, that Albany County will encourage municipalities within Albany County to adopt conservation easement ordinances, allowing for possible reductions of property taxes in exchange for conservation easement access, and be it further

RESOLVED, that Albany County will encourage local educators to teach about host and nectar plants, and promote the establishment of pollinator gardens throughout schools and the community, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the County Legislature is directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to the appropriate County Officials.

Referred to Conservation, Sustainability and Green Initiatives Committee – 3/11/19

Favorable Recommendation Conservation, Sustainability and Green Initiatives Committee – 4/23/19

Mr. Ward made a motion to amend the resolution as follows:

“DELETE the Sixth RESOLVED clause in its entirety”

On long roll call, the following members voted in favor: Messrs. Beston, Burgdorf, Cahill, Ms. Chapman, Messrs. Clay, Commisso, Drake, Ethier, Feeney, Grimm, Hogan - 11

Those opposed: Mr. Bullock, Ms. Cunningham, Messrs. Dawson, Domalewicz, Fein, Higgins, A. Joyce, R. Joyce - 8

Mr. Ward withdrew his motion and the Chairman stopped the vote.

On roll call the following voted in favor of the original resolution: Messrs. Cahill, Clay, Ms. Cunningham, Messrs. Dawson, Domalewicz, Drake, Ethier, Feeney, Fein, Frainier, Higgins, A. Joyce, R. Joyce, Ms. Lekakis, Mr. Mayo, Mss. McKnight, McLean Lane, Messrs. Miller, O'Brien, Ms. Plotsky, Messrs. Reinhardt, Simpson, Touchette, and Ms. Willingham – 24

Those opposed – Messrs. Beston, Bullock, Burgdorf, Ms. Chapman, Mr.

Commisso, Messrs. Grimm, Hogan, Mauriello, Mendick, Smith, Stevens, Tunny and Ward – 13

Resolution was adopted – 5/13/19