

HOUSE No. 981

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Mary S. Keefe

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to protect pollinator habitat.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Mary S. Keefe</i>	<i>15th Worcester</i>	<i>1/14/2025</i>
<i>Brian M. Ashe</i>	<i>2nd Hampden</i>	<i>1/22/2025</i>
<i>Patricia A. Duffy</i>	<i>5th Hampden</i>	<i>1/30/2025</i>
<i>Carmin Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/14/2025</i>
<i>David Henry Argosky LeBoeuf</i>	<i>17th Worcester</i>	<i>2/10/2025</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>3/3/2025</i>
<i>Adrienne Pusateri Ramos</i>	<i>14th Essex</i>	<i>3/6/2025</i>
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>	<i>2/27/2025</i>

HOUSE No. 981

By Representative Keefe of Worcester, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 981) of Mary S. Keefe and others for an investigation by a special commission (including members of the General Court) relative to opportunities for improving pollinator health. Environment and Natural Resources.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 843 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act to protect pollinator habitat.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 (a) There shall be a special commission established to study statewide opportunities for
2 improving pollinator health by increasing and enhancing native pollinator habitat.

3 The commission shall focus on identifying statewide opportunities for enhancing and
4 expanding pollinator habitat in both developed and natural areas such as farm field borders,
5 forest borders, residential areas, parks, urban areas, industrial areas, energy transmission
6 corridors, energy generating facilities and transportation corridors.

7 The commission shall consider enhancing and expanding pollinator habitat for a broad
8 range of native and managed pollinators including but not limited to wild and managed bees,
9 butterflies, moths, beetles, ants, bats and birds.

The commission shall report its findings, including any proposed legislation, to the house and senate committees on ways and means, and the joint committee on environment, natural resources and agriculture no later than March 1, 2026.

The commission shall consist of 11 members including:

1 member of the house of representatives, without a designating party; 1 member of the senate, without a designating party; the secretary of energy and environmental affairs or a designee, who shall serve as chair; the commissioner of the division of fisheries and wildlife, or a designee; the commissioner of agricultural resources, or a designee; and 6 members appointed by the governor: 1 of whom shall be a university of massachusetts faculty member specializing in the science of pollinator health; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the university of massachusetts extension with knowledge in crops which rely on pollinators and pollinator health; 1 of whom shall represent an advocacy group for farmers; 1 of whom shall be a beekeeper representing a regional or statewide beekeeping organization; 1 of whom shall represent an advocacy group for nurseries; and 1 of whom shall represent a membership based non-profit advocacy group dedicated to land protection.

(b) The special commission shall examine issues relevant to pollinator health, including:

(i) identifying current laws and regulations in the commonwealth and other states and countries related to protecting pollinators and pollinator health; (ii) studying public education and outreach plans regarding pollinator habitat that have been successful in other states; (iii) identifying adequacy of funding for efforts to promote or protect pollinator habitat; (iv) investigating the means used by other states to gather data on populations of pollinators; (v) evaluating existing best management practices for promoting pollinator health including, but not limited to, foraging

32 and proper food source diversity; (vi) studying the use of agricultural and nonagricultural lands,
33 such as transportation corridors, energy transmission corridors, parks, and working forests, and
34 how they may be used to provide pollinator forage and unique opportunities to increase
35 pollinator populations; (vii) research and identify ways to expand and coordinate public
36 education programs outlining steps individuals and businesses can take to help address the loss
37 of pollinator habitat.