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Environment and Agriculture Committee
New Hampshire House of Representatives
GP Room 152
107 N. Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

Subject: American Bird Conservancy SUPPORTS HB 1086

9 January, 2026

Dear Members of the Environment and Agriculture Committee,

American Bird Conservancy writes in **strong support of HB 1086**, an act prohibiting the sale of certain agricultural seeds treated with neonicotinoids.

Bird Declines due to Pesticide Overuse

North American Birds are in decline; they have experienced a 30% loss since 1970,ⁱ and the use of synthetic chemical pesticides like neonicotinoids has been repeatedly identified as a major driver. In New Hampshire, major contributors of chemical pollution stem from their use as a seed coating.

The greatest threat to birds from pesticides is not from direct exposure but the loss of insect prey. Neonicotinoids are highly water soluble by design and travel easily through water and indiscriminately kill invertebrates. Neonicotinoids remain in soil and water for years after their use. Their continued presence in soil can adversely impact beneficial species.ⁱⁱ

Studies have found that bird declines in areas where neonicotinoid use is high are driven by lack of prey,ⁱⁱⁱ not by direct exposure. Neonicotinoids have been linked to declines in non-target lepidopterans (moths and butterflies), important food sources for birds rearing chicks.^{iv}

Furthermore, neonicotinoids specifically have been found to drive bird declines in the United States, particularly for insectivorous and grassland birds.^v Recent evidence from

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the European Union also points to removal of neonicotinoids in the environment as a way to begin recovering bird populations.^{vi}

Inefficacy and Impacts of Neonicotinoid Seed Coatings

As a seed coating, neonicotinoids are most common on corn, soy, and wheat crops throughout the United States, yet their use in most cases is not economically beneficial and provides negligible benefits to growers while promulgating environmental destruction.^{vii}

- A single seed coated with a neonicotinoid contains enough active ingredient to kill a songbird^{viii}
- Neonicotinoids on seeds account for the vast majority of neonicotinoid use in the United States
- Less than 5% of the active ingredient on a coated seed makes it into the target plant^{ix}
- Sublethal effects on birds from neonicotinoids includes: decreased spermatogenesis, ataxia, loss of navigation, organ failure, and loss of primary senses^x

Impact of Bill in New Hampshire

Neonicotinoids are applied to virtually all of the 12,000 acres of corn planted in New Hampshire.^{xi} New Hampshire does not grow significant acreage of soybeans or wheat, making the potential change in use of neonicotinoids on those crops minimal and all the more important to put into statute now. The corn acres, however, are a major threat to the 190+ species of birds which breed in New Hampshire annually.^{xii}

Furthermore, the bill contains commonsense measures which would permit the use of neonicotinoids to address market shortcomings and emerging environmental and public health threats. This bill would make New Hampshire a nationwide leader in addressing some of the most dangerous and under regulated chemicals in use today while increasing choices for growers and minimizing environmental threats.

We urge the committee to favorably report S.587 to the legislature.

Sincerely,



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- ⁱ Rosenberg, K. et al. (2019). Decline of the North American Avifauna. *Science*.
<https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aaw1313>
- ⁱⁱ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S030147972031255X>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Hallmann, C. et al. (2014). Declines in insectivorous birds are associated with high neonicotinoid concentrations. *Nature*. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0304319>
- ^{iv} Van Deynze, B. et al. (2024). Insecticides, more than herbicides, land use, and climate, are associated with declines in butterfly species richness and abundance in the American Midwest. *PLoS One*.
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0304319>
- ^v Li, Y., Miao, R., & Khanna, M. (2020). Neonicotinoids and decline in bird biodiversity in the United States. *Nature Sustainability*, 3. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-020-0582-x>
- ^{vi} Perrot, T. et al. (2025). Weak recovery of insectivorous bird populations after ban of neonicotinoids in France, hinting at lasting impacts. *Environmental Pollution*, 385. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envpol.2025.127132>
- ^{vii} https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2014-10/documents/benefits_of_neonicotinoid_seed_treatments_to_soybean_production_2.pdf
- ^{viii} https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Neonic_FINAL.pdf
- ^{ix} Goulson, D. (2013). REVIEW: An overview of the environmental risks posed by neonicotinoid insecticides. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 50(4). <https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.12111>
- ^x <https://abcbirds.org/2023neonicreport>
- ^{xi} https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/Ag_Overview/stateOverview.php?state=New%20Hampshire&year=2025
- ^{xii} <https://nhaudubon.org/conservation/the-state-of-the-birds/>

