



*Protecting New Hampshire's
natural environment for
wildlife and for people.*

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January 14, 2026

The Honorable Judy Aron
House Environment and Agriculture Committee
Granite Place Room 153
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Support for HB 1086 prohibiting the sale of certain agricultural seeds treated with neonicotinoids.

Dear Chair Aron and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1086 on behalf of NH Audubon. We are a statewide conservation organization dedicated to protecting New Hampshire's environment for wildlife and for people.

HB 1086 prohibits the sale in New Hampshire of corn, wheat, and soybean seeds that have been treated with neonicotinoid insecticides and prohibits the use of such seeds in the State without a waiver from the commissioner of the department of agriculture, markets, and food. Neonicotinoids, often referred to as neonics, are a relatively new class of insecticides that were developed in the early 1990s to replace DDT and related compounds. These chemicals are designed to mimic the effects of nicotine, and work by binding to nerves, causing paralysis and eventually death. While about a dozen forms are now in use, those used as active ingredients in seed treatments include clothianidin, imidacloprid, and thiamethoxam.

Neonics are soluble in water, so when treated seeds sprout, the seed coating is absorbed into the plant's tissues, including roots, stems, and leaves, and eventually pollen, nectar, and fruit. As a result, these insecticides poison many non-target beneficial insects, including pollinators, decomposers, and biological control agents. Their water solubility also enables much of the seed coating to leach into soils, exposing soil invertebrates and microbes. Dissolved neonics in soil moisture eventually leach into groundwater and surface waters, where they can poison aquatic invertebrates. In addition, wind carries dust from the coatings that is generated during the planting process over long distances, spreading contamination over vast areas beyond the planted fields. Estimates suggest that less than 10% of a seed's coating is absorbed by the growing plant, while the remaining amount is released to the environment.

Native wildlife can experience both direct and indirect impacts of neonic-coated seeds. In particular, seed-eating birds that forage in recently planted fields can consume a large enough dose to be fatal.

Sub-lethal effects on birds include reduced fertilization rates, embryo size, eggshell thickness, hatching success, and chick survival.

Damage to pollinator populations alone is sufficient justification for reducing the use of neonicotinoids. Further justification lies in the lack of evidence that their use is actually beneficial. Multiple yield studies of corn and soybeans have failed to demonstrate clear and consistent evidence of increased yields from neonic-treated seeds. Clearly, the risks of these seed treatments greatly outweigh the benefits.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony regarding HB 1086. We strongly urge the Committee to vote this bill **Ought to Pass**.

Sincerely,



Carol R. Foss, Ph.D.
Senior Advisor for Science and Policy

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