CONFIDENTIAL

LEGISLATIVE BILL REVIEW FORM: 2015

Bill Number: H.539 **Name of Bill:** An act relating to the establishment of a Pollinator Protection Committee

Agency/Dept.: Agency of Natural Resources **Author of Bill Review:** Catherine Gjessing

Date of Bill Review: April 22, 2016 **Status of Bill (check one):**

☐ **Upon Introduction** ☐ **As passed by 1st body** ☒ **As passed by both bodies** ☐ **Fiscal**

Recommended Position:

☐ **Support** ☐ **Oppose** ☐ **Remain Neutral** ☒ **Support with modifications identified in #8 below**

Analysis of Bill

1. Summary of bill and issue it addresses. *Describe what the bill is intended to accomplish and why.*
The bill creates a Pollinator Protection Committee that is required to evaluate the US Department of Agriculture's five pillars of pollinator health, state pesticide requirements, pesticide regulations in general, and best management practices for effectiveness related to the protection of ting pollinators. The committee is also required to study outreach plans, identify sources of funding for pollinator protection, consider whether and how state buffer requirements could be used as pollinator forage or nesting areas, and develop a statewide pollinator protection plan. The Committtee is required to draft an written report for submission to the legislature.

2. Is there a need for this bill? *Please explain why or why not.* There is a need to address threats to pollinator populations and health. The Committee is a good first step for exploring strategies for protecting pollinators.

3. What are likely to be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for this Department?
Agency staff may be asked to provide techincal support to the Committee.

4. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for other departments in state government, and what is likely to be their perspective on it? The Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets (AAFM) is the lead on this bill and is required to provide administrative, technical and legal assistance to the Committee. Other potentiall affected agencies include the Agency of Transportation and the UVM Extension Service.

5. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for others, and what is likely to be their perspective on it? *(for example: public, municipalities, organizations, business, regulated entities, etc.)*
The issue is likely of broad interest to the public, as gardeners, farmers and others who rely on pollinators.

6. Other Stakeholders:

6.1 Who else is likely to support the proposal and why? Envinronmental groups, beekeepers, and some farmers.

6.2 Who else is likely to oppose the proposal and why? Some farmers, landowners and others who rely on pesticides in the course of business, and may be concerned about land use restrictions.

7. **Rationale for recommendation:** *Justify recommendation stated above.* There have been serious declines in the populations of some pollinators. Pollinators play a critical ecological and economic role in Vermont.

8. **Specific modifications that would be needed to recommend support of this bill:** *Not meant to rewrite bill, but rather, an opportunity to identify simple modifications that would change recommended position.*
The bill should be amended to include an ANR representative on the Committee, given the Agency's role in protecting wild pollinators and their habitats and in listing threatened and endangered species, including some pollinators.

Commissioner has reviewed this document: _____ ***Date:*** 4/25/16

Secretary has reviewed this document: _____ ***Date:*** 4-26-16