

# MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release



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## **Pollinator Roadsides Provision Now Law of the Land!** *Included in Transportation Bill Signed by the President*

The **Pollinator Partnership (P2)** applauds the President and the Congress for including a key provision encouraging pollinator habitat along roadsides in the “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)” [H.R. 22].

The President signed the FAST Act into law earlier this evening, providing a timely exclamation point to the “*Transportation Leaders Summit: Restoring the Nation’s Pollinator Habitat*,” convened by the White House over the past two days. The House and Senate overwhelming approved the FAST Act conference report on Thursday.

“For the first time ever, encouraging pollinator habitat along our nation’s roadsides is the law of the land! This is a major win for both States and pollinators,” said Laurie Davies Adams, P2 Executive Director. “We look forward to helping States reduce roadside maintenance costs while providing better habitat for pollinators.”

This is a huge victory for pollinators, culminating a five-year effort by the Pollinator Partnership to “pollinate” federal transportation law. Highway right-of-ways managed by State Departments of Transportation (DOT’s) represent 17 million acres of opportunity for States to both save money and improve pollinator habitat through Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM), including reduced mowing and strategic plantings of native forbs and grasses. Such win-win opportunities are also available for roadsides managed by counties and municipalities.

Section 1415 of the FAST Act directs the Secretary of Transportation to use existing authorities, programs and funding to assist IVM and pollinator habitat efforts by willing State DoT’s. Language is also added to a key funding eligibility account on habitat, forage, and migratory way stations for Monarch butterflies, other native pollinators, and honey bees.

This provision is based on H.R. 2738, the Highways BEE Act, which was introduced prior to 2015 National Pollinator Week by Reps. Jeff Denham (R-CA) and Alcee L. Hastings (D-FL), co-chairs of the Congressional Pollinator Protection Caucus (CP2C). Over 250 national, regional, and local organizations and 3,000 American scientists and individuals from all walks of life across the nation signed a petition in support of such legislation. For more information, go to <http://www.pollinator.org/BEEAct.htm>. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) secured a pollinator roadsides provision based on the Highways Bee Act in the Senate-passed bill. Denham got the same language in the House-passed bill.

The White House Transportation Summit on pollinator habitat is a key action implementing the Administration’s “National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators.” P2 collaborated with leaders of State Departments of Transportation (DoT’s), Administration officials and other key stakeholders with the shared objective of advancing efforts to expand and improve pollinator habitat on transportation assets across the Nation.

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### **ABOUT THE POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP (P2)**

Established in 1997, the Pollinator Partnership is the largest 501(c) 3 non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to the health, protection, and conservation of all pollinating animals. Pollinators, like bees, butterflies, birds and other animals, bring us one in every three bites of food, protect our environment. They form the underpinnings of a healthy and sustainable future. P2 manages **NAPPC**, a collaborative effort of over 120 organizations in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico whose common goal is to promote awareness of the essential role that pollinators play in food systems and ecosystems, and to provide the public with simple, effective ways to engage in environmental stewardship. P2’s science-based actions for pollinators include education, conservation, restoration, policy, and research. For more information, visit [www.pollinator.org](http://www.pollinator.org).