

May 1, 2009—via E-mail

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair
The Honorable Jack Kingston, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Request for \$20 Million in FY10 Allocation to USDA for Pollinator Research

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Kingston:

The undersigned organizations and companies urge the House Appropriations Agriculture Subcommittee to allocate \$20 million in Fiscal Year 2010 to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to begin implementing the new pollinator research provision authorized in the 2008 farm bill.

Honey bees are at serious risk. Today, Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), a host of other pests and pathogens, climate change, habitat loss and other threats to the health and population of honey bees and other pollinators in North America could jeopardize the integrity of our food supply and healthy wildlife ecosystems.

The requested allocation for FY10 is a wise investment, as honey bees and other pollinators are essential partners in agriculture and in healthy ecosystems, as are native pollinators. Honey bees and other pollinators make possible the production of well over \$15 billion in agricultural products in the U.S., and as much as \$250 billion worldwide.

The leading recommendation in a 2006 National Academy of Sciences, NRC report, the **Status of Pollinators in North America**, is to conduct critical research. **At a June 26, 2008 oversight hearing convened by the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture on the status of pollinator health including CCD, witnesses from our organizations were joined by leading researchers in identifying critical research needs that remain unfunded.**

The pollinator research provision in the Farm Act of 2008, attached as Exhibit 1, authorizes \$20 million per year in funding from FY08 through FY12. We appreciate that Congress did include \$800,000 for FY09 in the USDA, Agricultural Research Service budget targeting CCD research. However, research is needed on a broad range of threats to honey bees and other pollinators, and no appropriations were made to fund the farm bill pollinator research provision in FY08 or FY09.

Investments in honey bee and pollinator research at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have been stagnant for years and continue to fall far short of identified needs. The requested funding will underwrite critical unmet honey bee and pollinator research priorities that can lead

to scientific outcomes urgently needed to address pressing health challenges plaguing honey bees and threatening the economic viability of beekeepers.

We continue to neglect the health of our pollinating partners at our own peril. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

American Beekeeping Federation
Häagen-Dazs
Pollinator Partnership