

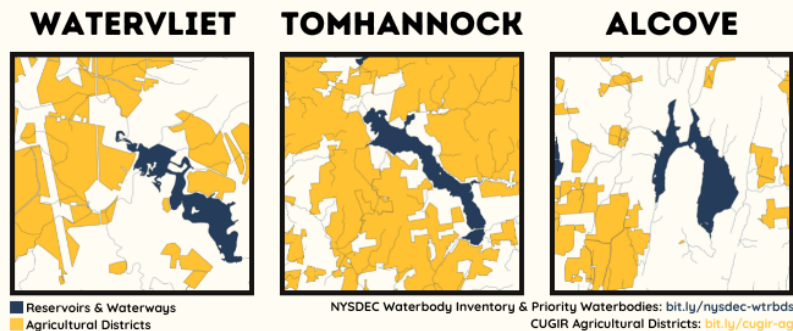
TIMBER | MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

The Birds and Bees Protection Act (S.1856 Hoylman-Sigal/A.3226 Glick)

Purpose: This legislation prohibits the sale or use of corn, soybean, and wheat seeds coated or treated with neonicotinoid pesticides and bans the use of neonicotinoids for ornamental plants and turf.

Background: Neonicotinoid compounds target an organism's nicotine acetylcholine receptors.¹ In 1996, Bayer successfully marketed a generation of neonicotinoid compounds that were uniquely effective at killing insects on contact due to the important role nicotine acetylcholine receptors play in an insect's central nervous system.² Neonicotinoids are now the most widely used insecticide in the world.³ The nicotine acetylcholine receptor is also very important to many other organisms, however. In central Montana, for instance, a population of white-tailed deer near imidacloprid-treated crops were found to have physical abnormalities such as mispositioned and undersized scrota, ectopic testes, and mandibular prognathia (underbite).⁴ Though the long-term human impacts of neonicotinoid consumption are not fully understood, early research finds that neonicotinoids are virtually unavoidable due to their ubiquity in drinking water and food items and –⁵ as with all environmental health threats – chronic neonicotinoid exposure is likely most harmful in the early stages of human development.⁶

Justification: Approximately 131,627 acres of cropland are divided between the Capital Region's 1,686 farms.⁷ Agricultural districts surround many key water reservoirs like the Tomhannock, which provides drinking water to Troy, Rensselaer, East Greenbush, North Greenbush, Brunswick, Schaghticoke, Poestenkill, Halfmoon, Menands, and Waterford.⁸



Just as we do not dispute that the Death Star eliminated traffic congestion on Alderaan,⁹ TIMBER acknowledges that neonicotinoid-treated seeds are very good at managing pests. We nevertheless support initiatives to curb their overuse due to their (1) ubiquity and (2) known or understudied impacts on everything else. As a Troy-based community organization committed to sustainable development and the protection of public goods, **TIMBER strongly supports this legislation.**

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6900273/>

² bit.ly/bbpa-neonic-sust

³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S004896972208487X?via%3Dihub>

⁴ <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-40994-9>

⁵ <https://bit.ly/bbpa-neonic-wtr>

⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4780670/>

⁷ https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/New_York/index.php

⁸ <https://www.troyny.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/AWQR2021.pdf>

⁹ <https://youtu.be/qs1xNRXROfA?t=123>

