

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release



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Pollinator Roadsides Provision Included in House Transportation Bill

The **Pollinator Partnership (P2)** applauds Rep. Jeff Denham (R-CA) for taking the lead in getting a key provision encouraging pollinator habitat along roadsides included in the Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform (STRR) Act of 2015 (H.R. 3763), a comprehensive bill to reauthorize and reform federal highway programs. H.R. 3763, including Denham's pollinator roadsides provision, was unanimously approved on October 22 by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Denham's pollinator roadsides provision is based on H.R. 2738, the Highways BEE Act, which was introduced prior to 2015 National Pollinator Week by Denham and Alcee L. Hastings (D-FL), co-chairs of the Congressional Pollinator Protection Caucus (CP2C). Over 250 national, regional, and local organizations and 2,800 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>.

"We applaud Rep. Denham for his effective leadership and are very excited about the prospect of increasing habitat for pollinators," said Laurie Davies Adams, P2 Executive Director. "This will be a major win for the states and pollinators." P2 had expressed strong support to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee leadership for the Denham provision.

"The bill gives states the ability to reduce roadside maintenance costs while providing better habitat for pollinators, including honey bees—similar to the efforts farmers already make to be good conservationists while they produce our food. Our pollinators are crucial to the strength of our communities and success of our agricultural industry," noted Denham. "The Pollinator Partnership has been an excellent partner in growing understanding and support for our provision."



The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's action for pollinators is a major benchmark in the 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 cash-strapped 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. The Denham provision directs the Secretary of Transportation to use existing authorities, programs and funding to assist IVM and pollinator habitat efforts by willing State DOT's. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) secured a pollinator roadsides provision included in the transportation reauthorization bill passed earlier this year by the full Senate.



L-R: Gene Brandi, Los Banos, CA, VP, American Beekeeping Federation; Rep. Jeff Denham (CA); Laurie Davies Adams, Exec Dir, Pollinator Partnership

Earlier this week, Rep. Denham received a special **2015 Pollinator Advocate Award** for his leadership on pollinator issues in the Congress from the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) at a VIP reception in Washington, DC. "Rep. Denham richly deserves this special award for his leadership on pollinator issues," said Davies Adams. NAPPC convened for the 15th year at the U.S. Department of Interior on October 20-22, and task forces committed to a number of consensus-based, collaborative projects over the coming year to benefit pollinators.



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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.