

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

S

1

SENATE BILL 225

Short Title: The Birds and the Bees Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Meredith, B. Jackson, Barringer (Primary Sponsors); Bingham, Brock, McInnis, Newton, Pate, Robinson, and Sanderson.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

March 11, 2015

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO CLARIFY THE AUTHORITY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO ADOPT
3 ORDINANCES RELATED TO BEE HIVES AND TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT
4 OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES TO STUDY STRATEGIES FOR
5 PROTECTING AND SUPPORTING POLLINATORS.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** Article 55 of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes is amended by
8 adding a new section to read:

9 **"§ 106-645. Limitations on local government regulation of bee hives.**

10 No county, city, or other political subdivision of the State shall adopt or continue in effect
11 any ordinance or resolution that prohibits any person or entity from owning or possessing five
12 or fewer bee hives."

13 **SECTION 2.** The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall study
14 all of the following issues:

- 15 (1) How the State can increase habitat for pollinators, including birds and
16 insects, on farmland across the State. In studying this issue, the Department
17 of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall address the following:
18 a. The willingness of farms to plant pollinator-friendly vegetation in
19 rural areas.
20 b. The ability of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
21 to provide support for a farm planting program from existing funds.
22 c. The ability of research stations or other Department of Agriculture
23 and Consumer Services properties to plant pollinator-friendly
24 vegetation.
25 (2) How the State can increase habitat for pollinators, including birds and
26 insects, on Department of Transportation rights-of-way and on other State
27 properties across the State. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer
28 Services shall solicit input from the Department of Transportation in
29 studying this issue.
30 (3) How the State can increase habitat for pollinators, including birds and
31 insects, on aboveground public utility easements or aboveground
32 infrastructure pathways across the State. The Department of Agriculture and
33 Consumer Services shall solicit input from the public utilities, electric
34 membership corporations, and municipalities that operate aboveground
35 utilities in studying this issue.



1 (4) Whether it would be appropriate to require planting of pollinator-friendly
2 vegetation on easements on State-owned lands as a condition of granting the
3 easement. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall
4 solicit input from the Department of Administration in studying this issue.

5 (5) Other strategies for increasing protection of and supporting existing
6 populations of pollinators within the State.

7 **SECTION 3.** The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall submit
8 the results of the study to the Environmental Review Commission by March 1, 2016. The study
9 report shall contain the information required in this section and any findings, legislative
10 proposals, cost/benefit analyses, or additional recommendations for legislative action to
11 proactively address pollinator-related issues that may threaten the economy, ecology, and
12 agricultural heritage of the State.

13 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.