

Testimony HB1258

Scott Skokos
Executive Director
Dakota Resource Council
1720 Burnt Boat Dr. Ste 104
Bismarck ND 58503
Testimony in Support for HB1258

Mr. Chair and members of the committee,

I am here today to support HB 1258. We support this bill because it is an inexpensive way to assess how pollinators are doing in North Dakota. Pollinators are important for crop production as well as honey production. It's no secret that honey production is a big business in North Dakota. North Dakota ranked first in the nation for honey production for the eighteenth consecutive year.

According to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Honey production in 2021 from North Dakota producers with five or more colonies totaled 28.3 million pounds, down 27% from 2020. There were 515,000 honey producing colonies in North Dakota during 2021, up 4% from 2020. But it seems nationally honey production is trending downward. Average yield was 55 pounds per colony, down 23 pounds from 2020. Producer stocks were 2.27 million pounds on December 15, 2021, down from 8.11 million pounds a year earlier.

These statistics tell us a story about North Dakota production and we should look into why this is trending downward. This bill would give us the tools that we need to ensure that our pollinators are healthy. Our ecosystem and agricultural economic interests lie in keeping these vital members of our ecosystem healthy. All this bill does is provide a modest amount of funds for a study to assess the state of pollinators in North Dakota, and determine if any intervention is needed.

We would respectfully request a DO PASS vote on this bill.