

# American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

NYSAAP, District II, Chapters 1, 2 & 3



## Memorandum of Support

### Birds and Bees Protection Act S.1856 /A.3226

March 6, 2023

The New York State American Academy of Pediatrics, representing more than 4500 pediatricians across our state, strongly supports passage of the Birds & Bees Protection Act. This bill prohibits the sale, distribution, or purchase of any corn, soybean, or wheat seeds treated with neonicotinoid pesticides and prohibits the application of neonicotinoid pesticides to ornamental plants and turf. Neonicotinoids (or “neonics”) are synthetic chemicals designed to bind to nicotine acetylcholine receptors. Neonics are very efficient pesticides because these receptors are abundant in the nervous system of insects. But they are also dangerous to humans and especially to very young children.

Emerging research indicates that neonics have negative impacts on human health. Half of all Americans carry some level of neonics at any given time, the highest levels being found in children. Neonics have been found to cause tremors, cardiac arrest, autism, and autism-like symptoms. A recent study found neonics present in 95% of pregnant women in New York and four other states. Fetuses and infants’ brains are still developing, making our youngest population uniquely susceptible to hazards in their environment, including neonics.

The impact of these pesticides is particularly disturbing because children consume a disproportionate amount of produce wherein neonics are abundantly present. Importantly, these receptors are also present in mammals and fish, so neonics also pose an extraordinary threat to human health through consumption beyond the neonic infused plants and indeed, throughout our food chain.

Neonic-treated pesticides sit at the cross-section of occupational and environmental health, conservation, agricultural sustainability, and environmental justice. We unequivocally support their elimination from our food system.

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