



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

LEGISLATIVE COMMENT

DATE: 1/26/2016 BILL NO.: SB 113

SUBJECT: ENTRY PERMIT REPEAL ON BEES, BEE COLONIES AND EQUIPMENT

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

MDA POSITION: SUPPORT

EXPLANATION:

SB 113 would simplify the process required for importing honey bees and associated equipment into Maryland by eliminating a second step of importation, an entry permit from Maryland, while maintaining assurances that only healthy bees and disease free equipment are imported into the state.

COMMENT:

Under current law, importing honey bees into Maryland is a two step process. First, a beekeeper must obtain an inspection certificate provided by the home state certifying that the bees have been inspected and are disease free. Once the beekeeper has acquired this certificate, they must then provide it to MDA and seek an entry permit. This permit verifies that Maryland approves the importation of these specific bees across the state lines. Both pieces of paper, the inspection certificate from the home state and import permit from Maryland, must then accompany the bees across state lines to their destination. This adds an extra layer of red tape for MDA staff and an added burden to beekeepers importing bees into the state. This bill will remove the need for the entry permit while maintaining the requirement for an inspection certificate, and all of the information previously required on the entry permit, from the state of origin. This will improve compliance with these requirements and continue to ensure that bees and equipment coming into the state are free from disease and documented by MDA.

MDA requests a favorable report for SB 113.