



Here are some talking points to help with crafting your own testimony in favor of Eugene becoming a **Bee City USA** city:

1. Why Support Bee City?

The purpose of becoming a Bee City is to raise awareness for native pollinators in Eugene and empower our community to protect these precious animals. Therefore, we support action for Eugene to officially become a Bee City USA. There are currently more than 66 official Bee Cities in the United States and growing! The purpose of becoming a Bee City USA is to support and encourage bee-friendly habitat creation and enhancement on both public and private properties. Bees are responsible for many of many of the lush trees, shrubs, and flowers that make our city parks beautiful and inviting. Bees are essential to community gardens and local food production, including gleaners that collect fresh fruit to share with low-income families.

2. Why Should Eugene Bee-come a Bee City?

The City of Eugene enjoys a wealth of natural resources that our communities cherish and want to protect. Whether past, present or future, how these natural wonders are blended and merged to the need for sustainable progress and growth is a challenge for all Eugeniens. In order to help prevent the negative impacts of pollinator declines in our city, we organized a Eugene Pollinator Protection Committee to collaborate between educators, business representatives, beekeepers, non-profit organizations, local government and community members in order to come up with proactive and creative ways to protect our imperiled pollinators!

3. Pollinators are declining!

Pollinators need our help! There is increasing evidence that many of our native pollinators are in decline. However, there are some simple things that Bee City can do to encourage pollinator diversity and abundance and help support our precious pollinators, like raising awareness about native pollinators and ways people can plant species that provide essential nutrition and habitat for them.

4. Climate Change is Happening Fast!

Amid rapid climate changes and other impacts of human activities, we are witnessing continuous declines in pollinator health across the planet. If this trend continues, nutrient-dense crops such as fruits, nuts and many vegetables will be replaced largely by self-pollinating and wind-pollinated crops like rice, corn and wheat. The intensification of agricultural mono-cropping and widespread pesticides use has a significant impact on wild bee declines across the globe. The unpredictable changes in global climate are likely to make such problems worse in the future.

5. Education is Key!

It's important for our city to take the initiative to educate shoppers about bee-killing pesticides. Pesticide labels don't warn consumers about the uptake of neonicotinoids through tissue in trees and plants. Many shoppers assume that products sold at garden and grocery stores are completely safe, thus are less likely to read pesticide labels. Research shows that the home use of pesticides containing neonicotinoids far exceeds "all safe levels" for pollinators and soil health and there is really no way to enforce proper pesticide application. Thus, we must work to raise awareness in our communities about the importance of clean, pesticide-free habitat for our bumblebees and butterflies.

6. Pollinators Keep Us Healthy!

Healthy and diverse pollinator populations are an integral piece in the larger picture of worldwide health and nutrition. Bees and other pollinating insects are crucial to the food produced by more than 2.5 billion small farmers worldwide. Research shows that if pollination is managed well on small diverse farms, crop yields increase by a statistically significant median of 24 percent. Foods richest in nutrients, such as kale, blueberries, apples and almonds depend on insect pollination. If a crop has been well pollinated, then larger and more nutritious leaves, fruits and seeds will develop. Plants naturally tend to put more of their growing energy into well-pollinated flowers and fruits thus increasing their quality, taste and nutritional value. The result is more nutrition per ounce of food, an important aspect of sustainable food production.

7. Act NOW, before it's too late!

Native bees, such as bumblebees and solitary bees that provide essential pollination for agricultural crops and native plants, are in trouble. Many species are at risk of extinction. The fruits and seeds that are produced as a result of native pollinators are eaten by birds, mammals, and other animals. As pollinator populations decline, the lower production of healthy fruits and vegetables is placing the entire natural system in peril.

Contact Krystal Abrams if you have any questions: [email](#) / call: 541-465-8860.

BeyondToxics.org / P.O. Box 1106, Eugene, OR 97440