

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 719 (Committee on Agriculture)
As Amended May 24, 2021
Majority vote

SUMMARY

This bill updates and changes portion of the Apiary Protection Act (APA), primarily changing the makeup of the California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Apiary Advisory Board, revising definitions, and updating provisions.

Major Provisions

- 1) Increases the membership of the Apiary Board (Board), from five to eight members, requires six of the eight board members to be registered California beekeepers that represent specified industry functions, requires the California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association to annually designate one of its members to serve as the seventh non-voting board member and authorizes the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to appoint an eighth public board member.
- 2) Extends certain requirements under the APA to a broker, defined as a person engaged in pollinating agricultural crops for a fee using hives owned by another person. Under existing law, failure to comply with a requirement of the APA, which this bill expands, is a crime.
- 3) Finds that the CDFA's pest inspection program should include training for inspectors or commissioners in apiculture, with curriculum approved by the CDFA secretary.
- 4) Specifies that an apiary inspection, as specified, can occur only if: a) the beekeeper is given 48-hour advance notice, b) the beekeeper or the beekeeper's approved person is present during the inspection, and c) the inspector uses proper sanitation protocols.

COMMENTS

California has the largest beekeeping industry of any state in the nation. Nearly three-quarters of the country's documented commercial honeybee crop pollination is conducted in California, adding over six billion dollars to the value of California agricultural products. 400 commercial and semi-commercial California beekeepers operate early 500,000 colonies of bees. The state is also the leader in honey production.

The Apiary Board is an advisory board to CDFA on all matters related to the beekeeping industry. The Apiary Board may make recommendations on all matters affecting the activities of CDFA in relation to the beekeeping industry, including an annual review of CDFA's apiary program.

According to the Author

A major portion of apiary code is significantly outdated, with most sections dating back to the 1980s. This brings critically necessary clarity and consistency to the entire code section. It also provides important updates to definitions and important notification requirements based on technology changes in the industry.

Arguments in Support

This bill primarily changes the Apiary Board to reflect changes in the past 30 years to beekeeping in California. The changes in this bill represent changes in technology and best practices, as well as improving on pest and nuisance issues related to beekeeping.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, this bill has costs of an unknown amount, but likely in excess of \$150,000 (General Fund), to CDFA. This bill does not grant CDFA authority to adjust assessments and fees to cover increased costs.

VOTES**ASM AGRICULTURE: 11-0-0**

YES: Robert Rivas, Mathis, Aguiar-Curry, Cunningham, Flora, Gray, Irwin, Jones-Sawyer, Levine, Villapudua, Wood

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 16-0-0

YES: Lorena Gonzalez, Bigelow, Calderon, Carrillo, Chau, Megan Dahle, Davies, Fong, Gabriel, Eduardo Garcia, Levine, Quirk, Robert Rivas, Akilah Weber, Holden, Luz Rivas

UPDATED

VERSION: May 24, 2021

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