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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

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### AB 1042 (Ransom) - The Cannella Environmental Farming Act of 1995: Managed Honeybee Health Program

**Version:** May 23, 2025

**Urgency:** No

**Hearing Date:** August 18, 2025

**Policy Vote:** AGRI. 5 - 0

**Mandate:** No

**Consultant:** Robert Ingenito

**Bill Summary:** AB 1042 would, upon an appropriation, authorize the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to establish and oversee the Managed Honeybee Health Program (MHHP), as specified.

**Fiscal Impact:** This bill would result in a General Fund cost pressure to fund MHHP; the magnitude is unknown, but likely in the millions of dollars on a one-time or ongoing basis. Additionally, this bill would result in ongoing annual General Fund costs to CDFA of an unknown amount, likely in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, to hire staff to establish MHHP, develop guidelines and a program framework, establish the advisory committee, and manage grant contracts. CDFA notes it has historically used a percentage of funding appropriated for grants to administer the related funds, and could do so for this bill if legislation appropriating the funds explicitly authorizes it to use up to eight percent of the authorized amount on administrative costs.

**Background:** Bees play a critical role in California's agriculture. Specifically, the honeybee is responsible for pollinating some of the state's most lucrative crops, including cherries, melons, and almonds. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife states over 1,200 types of crops require the help of pollinators, with pollinators contributing \$217 billion to the global economy. In California, pollinator-dependent crops are worth nearly \$12 billion. Additionally, in 2024, California bees also produced 13.3 million pounds of honey – nearly 10 percent of the country's supply – valued at \$33 million. Honeybees in California face many challenges including mites, pesticides, climate change, and hive theft.

**Proposed Law:** This bill would, contingent on an appropriation, do the following:

- Authorize CDFA, in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Panel, to establish and oversee MHHP, as specified.
- Authorize CDFA, to the extent that moneys are available, to provide incentives and grants to eligible recipients for health intervention projects that enhance the health and well-being of managed honeybees used in pollination services.
- Authorize CDFA to determine priorities for the program and to consider, in awarding grants, whether a project applicant or project meets specified criteria.
- Authorize CDFA to collect nonstate, federal, and private funds for the purpose of the program, require those funds to be deposited into the Managed Honeybee Health Special Fund Subaccount, which this bill would create within the Climate

Smart Agriculture Account, and continuously appropriate moneys in the subaccount to CDFA for the purpose of the program.

**Related Legislation:**

- SB 867 (Allen, Chapter 83, Statutes of 2024) enacted the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, creating Proposition 4, a \$10 billion bond to be placed before the state's voters for approval. The bond was approved on November 5, 2024.
- AB 391 (Villapudua, 2022) would have allocated \$5 million to CDFA to increase the number of grants for technical assistance and research for enhancing pollinator habitat and forage. The bill died on the Assembly Inactive File.
- AB 2421 (Mark Stone, Chapter 760, Statutes of 2018) established the Wildlife Conservation Board Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program.

**Staff Comments:** As noted above, if MHHP receives appropriated moneys, CDFA would require at least a percentage for administrative costs related to grant administration and implementation. CDFA notes that percentages of one-time funding, however, would create issues with staffing the program for the length of the grants, which are likely to be longer than two years from program development to closeout. CDFA notes that at minimum, the annual cost while running a small grant program would be \$336,000 for permanent staff, with additional direct costs scaling to the ultimate grant program size.

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