

Representative Joel K. Briscoe proposes the following substitute bill:

**JOINT RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE OF
INSECTS**

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Joel K. Briscoe

Senate Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This resolution emphasizes the importance and vulnerability of insects.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ recognizes the critical role of insects and insect biodiversity in the environment;
- ▶ highlights increasing insect population loss and the lack of protection and

consideration that insects have in land management and habitat restoration efforts;

and

- ▶ urges the state to consider policy that promotes healthy diversity of Utah's native insect species.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

WHEREAS, insects play a foundational role in maintaining food webs and ecosystems;

WHEREAS, insects are vital to agriculture as they pollinate much of our produce and flowers;



26 WHEREAS, insects are used in medical and pharmacological research;

27 WHEREAS, insects serve crucial roles in the environment and in public health,
28 including decomposition, waste management, soil production, nutrient recycling, and pest
29 control;

30 WHEREAS, insects are critical to the food web and are a nutrient rich and relied upon
31 food source for many species of plants and animals;

32 WHEREAS, insects such as the brine fly are essential to the Great Salt Lake ecosystem
33 as they are the primary food source for many species of migratory birds;

34 WHEREAS, dragonflies, wasps, hover flies, and other insects minimize crop damage,
35 increase agricultural yields, and minimize reliance on chemical pesticides;

36 WHEREAS, many pollinator species such as bumble bees, solitary bees, and hover flies
37 pollinate Utah's orchards and fruit and vegetable crops;

38 WHEREAS, Utah has played an important role in monarch butterfly breeding and
39 migration, but according to the Division of Wildlife Resources, their numbers have dwindled
40 from over a million annually to 200,000 in recent years;

41 WHEREAS, aquatic insect species such as mayflies, stoneflies, caddisflies, and
42 dragonflies are a food source for wildlife in waterways and are used as a measurement for
43 sampling water quality;

44 WHEREAS, insects are essential to wildlife recovery plans, including the recovery
45 plans of the June sucker and Bonneville trout;

46 WHEREAS, insects play a role in ecotourism as they contribute to the functioning of
47 the state's natural environments, including shortgrass prairies, shrubland steppe, desert
48 canyons, forests, riparian systems, and wetlands;

49 WHEREAS, honeybees are recognized as an important symbol of Utah history and
50 heritage, and insects are a food source for state symbols such as the California gull and rainbow
51 trout;

52 WHEREAS, threats to insect populations include loss of habitat, light pollution,
53 pesticides, invasive species, and incompatible land management practices;

54 WHEREAS, declines in insect biodiversity are documented worldwide, greatly
55 disrupting and unbalancing ecosystems;

56 WHEREAS, a 2019 study estimated that 40% of the world's insect species were in

57 decline and may disappear over the next few decades;

58 WHEREAS, insect populations lack significant protections and are often overlooked in
59 conservation and habitat restoration efforts;

60 WHEREAS, a federal listing of native Utah insect species as threatened or endangered
61 would negatively impact many state industries; and

62 WHEREAS, in February 2024, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service listed the
63 silverspot butterfly as threatened, the first insect subspecies native to Utah to be listed under
64 the Endangered Species Act:

65 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
66 recognizes the significance of insects in Utah's agriculture, environment, economy, and human
67 health.

68 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature urges increased efforts to consider
69 policy and land management practices that will promote the healthy diversity of native insect
70 species.

71 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to the Utah
72 Department of Agriculture and Food, the Utah Department of Natural Resources, the Division
73 of Wildlife Resources, and the Department of Transportation.