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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about pollinators and the Environment Bill.

I understand that an amendment to the Environment Bill related to the use of pesticides was brought forward in the House of Lords. I would like to assure you that protecting pollinators is a Government priority and that decisions on pesticide authorisation are already based on expert assessment by the Health and Safety Executive. As well as this, the independent UK Expert Committee on Pesticides also advises on novel scientific issues. I understand that current legislation requires that active substances and pesticide products have “no unacceptable effects on the environment ... having particular regard to its impact on non-target species”, which can include impacts on bees and other pollinators.

The scientific risk assessment of these products relies on detailed data requirements and processes, and the Government ensures that these are updated to keep in step with developments in scientific understanding. I also know that risk assessments made for active substances are already subject to public consultation. These assessments establish the key risks posed by pesticide substances in representative conditions of use. My ministerial colleagues will continue making decisions on pesticides use based on scientific risk assessments, while aiming to achieve high levels of protection for people, wildlife, and the environment.

Finally, ministers will be publishing the revised National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (NAP) at the end of 2021. This will provide improved protection for pollinators, as well as human and environmental benefits.

Because of these points, I do not believe the Lords Amendment is necessary.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY