

Dear _____,

I admire our country's concern about honeybees, US apiculture, agriculture and the environment. We all feel we need to take action to reduce the threat of CCD. But, halting Australian honeybee imports is unlikely to solve the problem of CCD or reduce the spread of IAPV in the US, and only hinder American beekeepers and growers.

First, IAPV is not proven to cause CCD. Second, IAPV has not been proven to originate in Australian imports and Australia does not have CCD. Third, the current prevalence and distribution of IAPV or CCD in the US has not been completely determined, but both IAPV and CCD are clearly already widely distributed in the US. Consequently a cessation of Australian imports alone will do little to stop the spread of IAPV, much less CCD. If the aim is to stop or reduce the spread of IAPV or CCD, then a ban on interstate transportation of bees, and quarantine of affected operations in the US might be equally or more appropriate. But in fact, that action would disrupt the entire US beekeeping industry, which has relied in part on Australian bee imports to establish sufficient hives to provide needed pollination services in the US. Ironically, many beekeepers devastated by CCD have used Australian honey bees to make up their losses, and if your request is implemented then those affected beekeepers will not have access to Australian bees to restore their hive counts and business operations. Moreover, growers of pollination dependent crops such as Almonds, Apples, Blueberries, Cranberries, Cucumbers, Melons, Pumpkins and Zucchini may not be able to obtain enough hives to meet their pollination needs.

I urge you to allow the continuation of Australian honeybee imports.