

Chapter 655

(House Bill 936)

AN ACT concerning

Natural Resources – Maryland Botanical Heritage Workgroup

FOR the purpose of establishing the Maryland Botanical Heritage Workgroup; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Workgroup; prohibiting a member of the Workgroup from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Workgroup to define challenges to, explore opportunities for improving, and make recommendations regarding the preservation of plant species native to the State and region; requiring the Workgroup to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Maryland Botanical Heritage Workgroup.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

- (a) There is a Maryland Botanical Heritage Workgroup.
- (b) The Workgroup consists of the following members:
 - (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;
 - (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
 - (3) the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Secretary's designee;
 - (4) the Secretary of the Environment, or the Secretary's designee;
 - (5) the Secretary of Natural Resources, or the Secretary's designee;
 - (6) the Secretary of Transportation, or the Secretary's designee;
 - (7) the State Botanist;
 - (8) the State Soil Scientist; and

(9) one representative of the Maryland Invasive Species Council, appointed by the Governor.

(c) The Governor may appoint any other individual to the Workgroup at the Governor's discretion.

(d) The Governor shall designate the chair of the Workgroup.

(e) The Department of Natural Resources shall provide staff for the Workgroup.

(f) A member of the Workgroup:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Workgroup; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(g) The Workgroup shall:

(1) define challenges to the preservation of plant species native to the State and region, including:

(i) insufficient prevention or control of biological invasions;

(ii) habitat fragmentation; and

(iii) the lack of data on species loss;

(2) explore opportunities for improving the preservation of native plant species, including:

(i) the incorporation of advances in biology, information systems, social networks, resilient systems theory, marketing, education, and technological innovation;

(ii) the expansion of efforts to provide extension-style support for citizens seeking to be good stewards of botanical heritage; and

(iii) the best examples of botanical conservation programs in other jurisdictions; and

(3) make recommendations regarding the preservation of native plant species, including:

(i) the establishment of botanical conservation goals;

- (ii) the collection of conservation data;
- (iii) how to address regulatory opportunities and obstacles; ~~and~~
- (iv) how to promote a profitable native plant and seed trade in the State; and
- (v) possible sources of revenue to pay for the Workgroup's recommendations.

(h) On or before December 31, 2013, the Workgroup shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2013. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of May 31, 2014, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, May 16, 2013.