



Environment and Transportation Committee

HB950 Maryland Native Plants Program

Position: Support

Hearing date: March 2, 2023

Nancy Blois for The Horticultural Society of Maryland.

Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, and Honorable Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee, The Horticultural Society of Maryland writes in support of SB836, the Maryland Native Plants Program.

The Horticultural Society, whose mission includes cultivating and promoting interest and participation in plants and horticulture, is acutely aware of the threats to our environment. As we work to adapt to climate change and its challenges, it is more important than ever to be mindful of and sensitive to preserving conditions and habitats that support our local populations of pollinators. In Maryland, where agricultural crops are a key component of the economy, it is incumbent on us to be sure that pollinators are able to survive and thrive. Bees and other pollinating insects are necessary for crop pollination and these insects in turn depend on native plants for the pollen that feeds them. The promotion of native plants—that is, plants that grew in the Mid-Atlantic region on their own, without being brought here to be planted by humans - plays a key part in maintaining conditions conducive to the well-being of these critically important insects.

The proposed legislation will increase public awareness about the importance of choosing native plants for home landscaping and to make it easier to quickly and easily locate plants that are native to this area. By promoting access to information describing Maryland natives and clear labeling of native plants at the point of sale (the big box home improvement store or the garden center) the citizen can more easily choose appropriate plants

Please support the passage of SB836 and support the health of our ecosystem and the pollinators so essential to our food supply.

Respectfully,

Nancy Blois

The Horticultural Society of Maryland

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