



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary

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### Legislative Comment

**Date:** March 23, 2022

**BILL NUMBER:** Senate Bill 7

**SHORT TITLE:** Invasive and Native Plants - Classification, Listing, and Use

**MDA POSITION:** Information

SB 7 tasks the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) with classifying each plant listed in the National Park Service (NPS) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas brochure as Tier 1 or Tier 2. There are 75 plants listed in the brochure. Thirty-one of the plants listed would not require listing under the Invasive Plant Advisory Committee (IPAC) law because of one of the following reasons:

1. They are presently on the IPAC list, or
2. They are listed as a MDA noxious weed, or
3. They are listed as a federal noxious weed, or
4. They are not sold in the nursery trade.

This leaves 44 plants that would require a weed risk assessment (WRA) to be completed. WRA's are a scientific review of the invasiveness of a plant, and require many hours of research of peer reviewed journal articles, review of maps and GIS data, along with state specific data for each plant that is held in the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It requires additional software, which also requires additional training. In some cases, WRAs have taken 4-6 weeks to complete, per plant. WRAs are completed in concert with DNR and the University of Maryland, if needed.

**The department currently has adequate and sufficient staff and resources to conduct its mission effectively and efficiently. Any additional legislatively-mandated program or regulation, such as this, will likely hamper our efficiency, force us to divert resources away from current core competencies and likely disrupt customer service and/or diminish services.**

If you have additional questions, please contact Cassie Shirk, Director of Legislation and Governmental Affairs, at [cassie.shirk@maryland.gov](mailto:cassie.shirk@maryland.gov) or 410-841-5886.