

March 11, 2025

Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee

I urge you to provide a favorable report for HB368, Annual Maryland Native Plant Commemorative Month

Establishing an Annual Maryland Native Plant Month law will raise public awareness about the critical role native plants play in supporting a healthy, sustainable environment. I enjoy gardening and creating healthy environments in my community and this bill will support my efforts.

Why is this important?

- Increased public awareness creates greater demand for natives and that increases promotional and sales opportunities for local businesses, including retail nurseries, wholesalers, growers, landscapers, design firms, farmers markets and more.
- A recurring May Maryland Native Plant Month law gives community groups, environmental organizations, clubs, the nursery industry, and the public the assurance needed to plan fun and engaging activities around Native Plant Month well ahead of May. Proclamations have to be renewed every year but a law is permanent and predictable.
- Natives are adapted to our climate, they use less water, capture toxic carbon from the air reduce the need for polluting pesticides and fertilizers, and are easier to grow.
- The massive root systems of native plants help reduce soil erosion, curb toxins and sediment run-off from entering our streams and rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. Poor water quality has negative consequences for the livelihood of our local watermen, seafood industries, and businesses that provide bay related recreational activities.
- The expanded and beautiful selection of native plants that attract an abundance of fun and interesting pollinators to our backyard gardens and landscapes will not only delight our citizens but will help reverse the rapid decline of our essential native pollinators.

Best of all, HB368 is bipartisan, has no mandates and will not cost taxpayers a dime. Please provide a favorable report for HB368.

Sincerely,

David Mosher

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