

**Anna Kelly submitting testimony on behalf of Live Sust Inc.
9509 Burning Tree Rd.
Bethesda, MD 20817**

Bill: HB0368

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: March 13, 2025

House Committee: Health and Government Operations

My name is Anna Kelly and I am a landscape professional, writing to you on behalf of the company I work for, Live Sust Inc. We provide battery-powered and eco-friendly landscaping services in Montgomery County, MD and Washington, DC. We welcome and support this recognition of native plants.

We have been educating our customers about the many benefits of native plants and providing native plant installations for the last several years. As soon as our clients learn about natives, they are so eager to plant them in their yards.

Planting natives in home gardens is such an easy and wonderful way for people to get involved with supporting local ecology. The main thing standing in the way of native plant gardens is a lack of general public knowledge on the subject. A month to recognize and celebrate native plants each year would go a long way to remedy that issue.

In my view, this bill only has benefits – there are no downsides. Native plants need far fewer inputs (water, fertilizer, etc.) than non-natives, which makes them supportive of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. They also provide food and habitat for pollinators and birds. Native gardens reduce erosion and improve soil quality. They also foster a sense of place and land connection for people.

These plants that are native to Maryland deserve to be recognized and honored by the state. They do so much for us, it is due time that they receive our acknowledgment and praise.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important legislation.