



March 13, 2025

HB 368 - SUPPORT

General Provisions - Commemorative Month - Maryland Native Plant Month

Dear Chair Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Vice-Chair Bonnie Cullison, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

This bill promotes the sale of plants native to the state by establishing May as month for Marylanders to focus on the benefits of native plants.

A native plant is one which likely had a presence within our state prior to European settlement. Our native wildlife evolved with the plants here, some can only feed on plants they co-evolved with. Native plants supply food for insects and wildlife that are food for other wildlife. They also provide wildlife habitat more generally (cover and places to rear their young). Native plants are well adapted to our climate and soils and as a result are generally easier to grow and easier to maintain, needing little or no pruning, deadheading, watering, or fertilizing. After increasing the diversity of indigenous plants in urban areas, researchers from the University of Melbourne witnessed a seven times increase in the number of insect species in three years, confirming the ecological benefits of urban greening projects. Their findings were published in the British Ecological Society journal, Ecological Solutions and Evidence [Luis Mata, Amy K. Hahs, Estibaliz Palma, Anna Backstrom, Nikolas Johnston, Tyler King, Ashley R. Olson, Christina Renowden, Tessa R. Smith, Blythe Vogel, Samantha Ward. Large positive ecological changes of small urban greening actions. Ecological Solutions and Evidence, 2023; 4 (3) DOI: 10.1002/2688-8319.12259]. Please vote for this bill.

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