

HB0217 “Maryland Native Plant Month Act”  
Government, Labor and Elections Committee  
March 17, 2026  
FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Delegate Melissa Wells and Members of the Committee,

We write in support of a FAVORABLE vote for an annual Native Plant Month in Maryland (HB0217).

The Garden Club of America (GCA) launched a **Native Plant Month Initiative in 2022**, with a goal of formally establishing a Native Plant Month in all 50 United States. As of this writing 33 states and DC have passed proclamations establishing April or May Native Plant Month, and 11 states have passed legislation making Native Plant Month permanent. These states are Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, Virginia and West Virginia. We hope that the state of Maryland will pass this permanent, non-partisan legislation.

Native plants are essential for resilient ecosystems. They promote biodiversity, conserve water, contain soil erosion, improve soil health, mitigate climate change and create habitat and food for a variety of wildlife. Establishing a Native Plant Month would encourage the public to learn more about the beautiful and varied plants native to Maryland and will prepare the nursery industry for the growing demand for and interest in native plants and how they benefit the economy, health and sustainability of Maryland’s ecosystems.

As the Garden Club of America Representatives for Conservation and Horticulture in Zone VI, which encompasses Maryland, we represent twelve clubs with nearly 700 members.

We hope the GLE Committee will give a FAVORABLE report on HB0217.

We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Liz Evans*  
GCA Zone VI Conservation Chair  
*Georgina Horsey*  
GCA Zone VI Horticulture Chair  
*Meredith McDonagh*  
GCA Immediate Past Zone VI Conservation Chair  
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