



Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

Testimony On: HB 217 – General Provisions – Commemorative Month – Maryland Native Plant Month

Organization: Wild Ones Greater Frederick Maryland

Submitting: Carey Murphy

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: March 17, 2026

Dear Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 217 – General Provisions – Commemorative Month – Maryland Native Plant Month. We strongly urge the Committee to issue a **favorable** report on HB 217.

The Wild Ones Greater Frederick Maryland chapter is one of 99 chapters across the country with a mission to educate and advocate for native plants, the foundation of our ecosystems. Our chapter was established in 2024 to fill a void in central Maryland. Despite the benefits of native plants—pollinator support, flood control, air and water purification, etc.—there are too few of them in Frederick, Washington, and Carroll counties.

In order to increase native plants in our communities and raise awareness of their essential services, our non-profit at no cost organizes plant swaps, offers native plant garden tours, participates in community science, and partners with native plant nurseries and landscape architects. We also educate our community and work with schools. At a recent middle school visit where we demonstrated how to grow native plants from seed, students were unfamiliar with native plants and their significance to ecosystems and our own health.

In Maryland's fastest growing county Frederick County, nature especially needs nurture. The permanent designation of "May as Native Plant Month" will afford us additional opportunities to effectively collaborate with businesses, schools, and neighbors to plan programming, provide outreach, practice conservation, and share native plants at the height of the spring planting season.

For these reasons, we request the Committee to issue a **favorable** report on HB 217.

Sincerely,

Carey Murphy

CAREY MURPHY

Vice-President, Wild Ones Greater Frederick Maryland

Cc: Jan Knox, President

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