



Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

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

Organization: Mobilize Frederick

Submitting: Kathy Kinsey

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.

Mobilize Frederick, a nonprofit community advocacy organization formed to assist with implementation of innovative local solutions to address climate change, strongly urges the Committee to issue a **favorable** report on HB 217, which would permanently designate May as “Maryland Native Plant Month.”

Native plants are the foundation of our natural ecosystems and life-supporting processes. They promote public health, increase resilience to extreme weather, and contribute to the state’s agricultural and green economies. Native plants sequester carbon, provide food and habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, absorb stormwater, improve soil health and air and water quality. In Frederick County’s recently released [Climate and Energy Action Plan](#), (CEAP), native plants and trees are prominently featured as the workhorses for nature-based solutions to our changing climate.

While CEAP envisions active collaboration with community members to achieve the Plan’s native landscaping and conservation goals, general public awareness of native plants and their benefits remains low. In Frederick County, native plantings are not common on public or private property, including our schools and libraries. Native plants are not widely available for sale and often difficult to procure.

At no cost to the State, this bill would raise awareness and encourage businesses, environmental groups, educators, and local governments to develop strategies to improve outreach and education, incorporate native plants into our landscapes, and support the nurseries and vendors that are needed to sustain the increasing demand for native plants.

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

Sincerely,

KATHY KINSEY
Chair, Government Affairs Committee

cc: Karen Cannon, Executive Director