

Chairwoman Alzate and Honorable Members of the House Special Legislation Committee:

My name is Erica Pernice and I live in Riverside Rhode Island.

I am writing to urge you to support [H7230](#) (McGaw), which would declare the month of May as "Native Plant Month".

I am an educator at Rhode Island School of Design teaching about our food systems. When I'm not teaching, I am farming at a local chemical free flower and vegetable farm. My work is centered around the interconnectivity of our food ecosystems focusing especially on the importance of building resilience. Without native plants, we cripple our environment which we cannot separate ourselves from. I am not exaggerating when I say our existence depends on how we reintegrate ourselves into beneficial native landscapes. That can start with this bill and the awareness it brings to our communities about the importance of native plants and pollinators. I'm greatly inspired by the work of Dr. Doug Tallamy and encourage everyone to read his work. Below is a quote:

"...humans now occupy or have seriously altered nearly all of the spaces outside our parks and preserves. Each of us carries an inherent responsibility to preserve the quality of earth's ecosystems. When we leave the responsibility to a few experts (none of whom hold political office), the rest of us remain largely ignorant of earth stewardship and how to practice it. The conservation of Earth's resources, including its living biological systems, must become part of the everyday culture of us all, worldwide."

— Douglas W. Tallamy, [Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard](#)

Please pass this bill out of committee and to the House floor with a recommendation for passage.

Sincerely,

Erica Pernice, Riverside RI