



# Maryland Native Plant Month Act

Sponsors Delegate Dana Stein and Senator Ben Brooks

HB 0217 SB 0229

This bill will permanently designate every May as Maryland Native Plant Month. It's an **economic driver** for local businesses and an **environmental win** for communities. Encouraging everyone to plant native trees and plants turns a simple idea into big impact at zero cost to taxpayers. Here's how:

## Maryland Jobs & Economic Growth

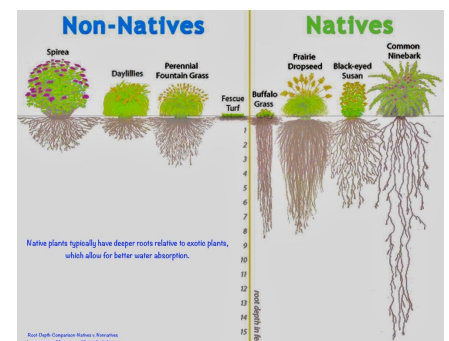
- **Boosts Local Sales:** Drives demand for native plants, boosts revenue for local horticulture and related industries including wholesale and retail growers, nurseries and garden centers, directly supports the new **Department of Agriculture's Maryland's Best Native Plants Certification Program** and keeps nearly every dollar in state;
- **Business Certainty:** Predictable timing and statewide focus gives businesses the confidence to hire seasonal staff, expand inventory and plan promotions - turning planning certainty into economic growth;
- **Community Action:** Provides a permanent window and lead time to plan educational activities and community-led plantings of pollinator and rain gardens, stream tree buffers, invasive plant removal, community stream cleanups and more;
- **Leverages Economic Impact of Volunteers:** Maryland volunteers contributed a **value of \$35.53\* per hour in 2025**. Providing an annual focus at the height of planting season will exponentially leverage the impact of this committed volunteer labor force - saving our state millions of dollars.

Supports volunteer dependent state programs - here are a few examples:

- Maryland's [Chesapeake Legacy Act](#) and farmer [LEEF program](#).
- DNR's urban focused [Tree-Mendous Maryland](#)
- DNR's Eastern Shore focused [Roots for Resilience](#)

## Protecting our Food, Air, Water, and Bay Heritage

- **Clean Waterways & The Bay:** Native plants' deep and massive roots stabilize soils and reduce runoff that can block sunlight to underwater sea grasses, fueling algae blooms and dead zones. These conditions cause severe drops in dissolved oxygen levels depriving our iconic blue crabs and striped bass of all life. **Maryland's \$600M seafood industry and \$21B tourism sector** depend on a clean thriving bay;
- **Pollinator Support:** Native bees and pollinators are essential to Maryland's **\$3B agriculture** sector. Loss of native plant habitat and overuse of pesticides are contributing to alarming pollinator decline. Planting more natives is the only way to reverse this trend.
- **Nature-Based Solutions:** Native plants and trees are the high-performance engines driving modern Green Stormwater Infrastructure and Best Management Practices (BMPs) used in urban settings and on farms. These "green tools" improve soil health, capture carbon dioxide and air pollutants that harm human health, support native pollinators, and curb toxic sediment from entering our waterways.



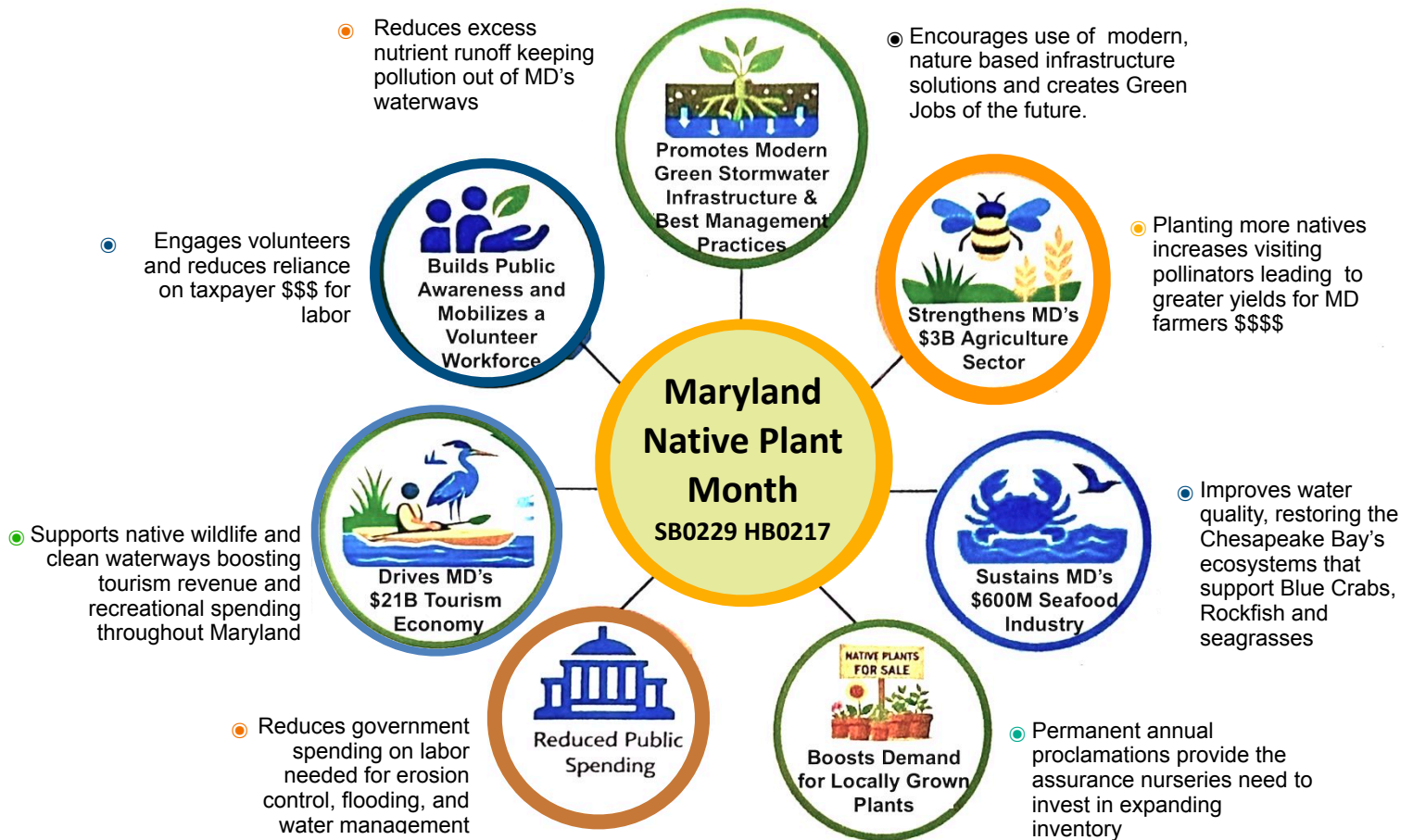


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Launched in 2022, a program to establish a **Native Plant Awareness Month** in every state and the District of Columbia was initiated by the national organization, The Garden Club of America. As of 2025, 44 states and DC observed a native plant month proclamation with **11 states converting it to a permanent law**. We ask that Maryland join these states.



**Together, we can do this Maryland!**

