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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

HOUSE RESOLUTION

DESIGNATING MAY OF 2025 AS “RHODE ISLAND NATIVE PLANT MONTH”

Introduced By: Representatives McGaw, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Cotter, Craven,
Boylan, Ajello, Tanzi, Read, and Shallcross Smith
Date Introduced: May 01, 2025

Referred To: House read and passed

- 1 WHEREAS, Native plants support local ecosystems, providing habitat and food for
- 2 wildlife, help maintain soil and water quality and are crucial for a balanced and sustainable
- 3 environment; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Rhode Island is home to more than 1300 native plant species, which include
- 5 trees, shrubs, vines, grasses, and wildflowers; and
- 6 WHEREAS, Rhode Island's native plant species provide food, such as nectar, pollen,
- 7 seeds, and foliage, and prime habitat, including essential shelter and nesting sites, for various
- 8 types of wildlife in the State in ways that non-native plants cannot, making the expanded
- 9 cultivation of native plants in Rhode Island a viable and effective means by which the State can
- 10 both preserve its existing wildlife habitats and populations and effectively offset and mitigate any
- 11 prior losses in wildlife habitat or populations that have occurred in the State as a result of
- 12 development; and
- 13 WHEREAS, Native plants are well-adapted to Rhode Island's soils, wetlands,
- 14 temperatures, precipitation, and environmental conditions; and, consequently, are the best at
- 15 conserving and protecting our environment against flooding and erosion while maintaining and
- 16 restoring the State's air, water, and soil quality; and
- 17 WHEREAS, Native plants are vital to Rhode Island's biodiversity and enable the State's
- 18 wildlife to prosper; and
- 19 WHEREAS, Native plants incorporated into the landscaping in our yards and
- 20 communities help increase the amount of habitat available to our native wildlife and are necessary

1 for biodiversity and a healthy ecosystem, and require far fewer fertilizers, soil amendments, or
2 pesticides, and use less water than conventional landscapes; and

3 WHEREAS, On May 3, 2023, the 118th Congress passed Senate Resolution 152,
4 declaring May as "National Native Plant Month"; and

5 WHEREAS, According to U.S. Senate Resolution 152, "native plants are indigenous
6 species that have evolved and occur naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, and habitat" and
7 "are essential components of resilient ecosystems and the natural heritage of the United States";
8 and

9 WHEREAS, According to Rhode Island's Native Plant Society, native plants preserve our
10 rich biological heritage; and provide shelter, as well as nectar, pollen, and seeds that serve as food
11 for native butterflies, insects, birds, and other wildlife in ways that non-native plants cannot
12 provide; provide diversity in form, texture, and color to fit any landscape style and are hardy and
13 easy to grow once established; and

14 WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the value of Rhode Island's native plants and
15 encourage public awareness of the many benefits they provide to Rhode Island's economy, to
16 pollinators, and the health of Rhode Island's environment; now, therefore be it

17 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
18 designates May of 2025 as "Rhode Island Native Plant Month" in order to preserve the heritage
19 and the importance of native plants for clean air, water, and soil stability in the State of Rhode
20 Island; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully requests the Rhode Island Department
22 of Environmental Management (DEM) to urge all citizens to educate themselves about the
23 importance and history of Rhode Island's native plants and the many benefits they provide to
24 pollinators, and to preserve Rhode Island's biological heritage in aiding in the prevention of
25 flooding and erosion and maintaining and preserving the health of Rhode Island's economy and
26 environment; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
28 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Terrence Gray, Director of the Rhode Island
29 Department of Environmental Management.

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