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January 23, 2019

Senator Cecil Thomas
Ohio Senate
Senate Building, 2nd Floor
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: Ohio Native Plant Month Proposed Legislation / Letter of Support

Dear Senator Thomas;

I reside in your district in Oakley and have my offices in downtown Cincinnati.

I am Chairman of Scenic Ohio a statewide 501 (c) (3) non-profit charitable organization. Scenic Ohio was founded as the "Ohio Roadside Council" in 1933. We renamed the organization Scenic Ohio 20 + years ago and affiliated with the national organization Scenic America. The mission of Scenic Ohio is to improve the safety and beauty of Ohio's highway corridors and conserve Ohio's many scenic resources.

One of the key goals of Scenic Ohio since its' early beginnings is to advance the use of native plants along our highway corridors and related public properties. These plants are generally hardy, less expensive to maintain and connect to Ohio's unique and diverse ecologies. Today native plants have become the normal approach to plant selection in most Ohio residential, commercial, institutional and public places.

In today's world with the increased urbanization and related impacts on agricultural lands we also advance the increased planting of native pollinators. Pollinator plants support the health of bees that support Ohio's agriculture, orchards, vineyards and related plant and nursery industries.

Scenic Ohio conducts half day workshops with the Ohio Department of Transportation outlining sustainable and maintainable landscape solutions. Several of these education sessions provide detailed information on native plants and pollinators. ODOT is adopting the use of native plants and pollinators along the highways of Ohio and has a number of demonstration projects underway.

Scenic Ohio enthusiastically endorses making April "Ohio Native Plant Month". Please consider co-sponsoring the bill with Senator Bob Hackett.

Thank you.

Gary W. Meisner, FASLA
Chairman