

**Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
Proponent Testimony
House Bill 364**

*Mary Turocy, The Nature Conservancy in Ohio
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Good afternoon, Chair Shaffer, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony as a proponent of HB 364, which will permit conservation organizations and private individuals to distribute seeds non-commercially with associates, members, and friends.

The Nature Conservancy is a global organization with chapters in all 50 states and projects in over 70 countries. We are a non-partisan, science-based organization that seeks to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. We work collaboratively with other conservation organizations, farmers, sportsmen groups, governments, local communities, and park districts to develop pragmatic solutions to conservation challenges, including land conservation, water quality, and our changing climate. More than 65,000 Ohioans are Nature Conservancy supporters, and we own and manage over 20,000 acres of nature preserves throughout the state.

The Nature Conservancy thanks Representatives Dobos and Klopfenstein for the introduction of HB 364 and supports its passage in order to better protect the resources needed to sustain the Monarch butterfly population in Ohio, and to promote the planting and propagation of native plants and native plant habitats to ensure Ohio's natural spaces thrive. As a conservation organization, The Nature Conservancy seeks to defend the richness of biodiversity and the lands and waters upon which life depends. Increasing opportunities for nonprofit, governmental, and grassroots community organizations to non-commercially share healthy seeds of native Ohio species can increase these efforts. Permitting conservation organizations to share seeds will ensure that The Nature Conservancy and our partners have access to locally harvested seeds for native plants that will thrive in the lands we protect. This bill will help to ensure that the plants, animals, and insects that call Ohio home remain healthy and abundant for generations to come.

The Nature Conservancy respectfully urges you to pass HB 364 to promote the health of habitats necessary for the Monarch butterfly and to protect Ohio's rich diversity of plant and animal life. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation and I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mary Turocy
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The Nature Conservancy