

Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

July 21, 2025

Re: Bill 26-25, Vegetation - Invasive Plants and Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 25-10,
Landscaping Requirements - Native Plants

Position: Support with Amendments

Dear President Stewart, Vice President Jawando, and Members of the Montgomery County Council,

We, the undersigned organizations, write in support of Council Bill 26-25 and ZTA 25-10, aimed at addressing the use and sale of invasive plant species in Montgomery County. This is a vital step forward in protecting our native ecosystems, strengthening climate resilience, and safeguarding the long-term health of the County's environment.

Invasive plant species pose serious ecological and economic threats by outcompeting native vegetation, degrading wildlife habitats, increasing the risk of wildfires, and imposing costly management burdens on public and private landowners. We commend the Council for recognizing the need to curb the proliferation of these harmful species through stronger regulation and public education. The undersigned organizations also support the following amendments to strengthen the legislation:

1. **Clarify the weed definition:** For the Bill language, we recommend using the [Maryland Invasive Species Council's](#) list for what constitutes a weed versus invasive plant. From the inclusion of the eight types of weeds in the Bill as currently written, we are assuming the use of the Maryland Department of Agriculture's list of noxious weeds, which is not regularly updated. Prior to 2020, the last time that list was amended was in 1987. Council Bill 26-25 and ZTA 25-10 should include both [terrestrial](#) and [aquatic](#) invasives, which can be found on the Invasive Species Council's list.
2. **Update the language to use the most up to date State Native Plant Law:** The [Maryland Native Plant Program](#) was signed into law by Governor Moore, and includes the [Maryland Plant Atlas](#). We would recommend using this definition for what is native to our region, rather than the broader Mid-Atlantic region. Most importantly, it establishes the [Maryland's Best Native Plant Program](#), which offers resources to residents about options for native plants, trees, and shrubs; provides retailers of native plants; and is vetted by the Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Extension, Maryland Native Plant Society, and the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

We appreciate your leadership on this critical issue and urge you to support Council Bill 26-25 with these amendments and ZTA 25-10. We look forward to working with you to create a more ecologically sound and sustainable future for Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

Tree Friends United

Conservation Montgomery

Potomac Conservancy

Nature Forward

Friends of Sligo Creek

Friends of Ten Mile Creek and Little Seneca Reservoir (FOTMC)

Montgomery County Sierra Club

West Montgomery County Citizens Association