

By: Senator(s) Michel, Kirby, Barnett,
Caughman, Frazier, Chassaniol, Jackson,
England, Younger, Boyd, McCaughn, Seymour

To: Tourism

SENATE BILL NO. 2137

1 AN ACT TO DESIGNATE EACH APRIL AS "MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT
2 MONTH" IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE HERITAGE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF
3 NATIVE PLANTS FOR CLEAN AIR, WATER AND SOIL STABILITY; AND FOR
4 RELATED PURPOSES.

5 WHEREAS, native plants are essential for healthy and diverse
6 ecosystems and are critical for clean air, water, and soil
7 stability; and

8 WHEREAS, Mississippi is home to more than 2,700 native plant
9 species which include trees, shrubs, vines, grasses and
10 wildflowers; and

11 WHEREAS, native plants are well-adapted to Mississippi's
12 soils, wetlands, temperatures, precipitation, and environmental
13 conditions; and consequently, are the best at conserving and
14 protecting our environment and adapting to its changes; and

15 WHEREAS, on March 25, 2021, the U.S. Senate passed Senate
16 Resolution 109, declaring April as "National Native Plant Month";
17 and



18 WHEREAS, according to Senate Resolution 109, "native plants
19 are indigenous species that have evolved and occur naturally in a
20 particular region, eco-system, and habitat"; and

21 WHEREAS, according to the Mississippi Native Plant Society,
22 native plants preserve our rich biological heritage; provide
23 shelter, as well as, nectar, pollen and seeds that serve as food
24 for native butterflies, insects, birds, and other wildlife in ways
25 that nonnative plants cannot provide; provide diversity in form,
26 texture, and color to fit any landscape style and are hardy and
27 easy to grow once established; and

28 WHEREAS, Mississippi's rarest native plants include four
29 species that are federally listed under the Endangered Species Act
30 of 1973: Price's Potato-Bean, American Chaffseed, Louisiana
31 Quillwort and Pondberry; and

32 WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the value of
33 Mississippi's native plants and encourage public awareness of the
34 many benefits they provide to Mississippi's economy, and to
35 pollinators, and to the health of Mississippi's environment:

36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE
37 OF MISSISSIPPI:

38 **SECTION 1.** (1) Beginning with April 2023 each month of
39 April is hereby designated as "Mississippi Native Plant Month" in
40 order to preserve the heritage and the importance of native plants
41 for clean air, water and soil stability in the State of
42 Mississippi.



43 (2) During the month of April, the Mississippi Department of
44 Agriculture and Commerce shall urge all citizens (a) to educate
45 themselves about the importance and history of Mississippi's
46 native plants and the many benefits they provide to pollinators,
47 and (b) to preserve Mississippi's biological heritage in aiding in
48 the prevention of flooding and erosion and maintaining and
49 preserving the health of Mississippi's economy and environment.

50 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
51 and after its passage.

