

Submitter: Ellen Silva

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3173

I strongly support advancing HB 3173 to establish the OregonFlora Program at Oregon State University. Their work thus far has been invaluable to me in several areas.

I am a contributor to the Oregon Bee Atlas, part of the Oregon Bee Project which was created several years ago by the Oregon legislature. Their mission is to create knowledge about our native bees, both which species we have in Oregon but also which plants they require to thrive. As part of our work, we record the plants on which we observe bees using iNaturalist. Often, we are not able to identify in the field exactly which species of plants the bees use, but thanks to the efforts of OregonFlora, either we can use their online resources or the reference books they have published to get further in our IDs OR one of their members actually takes the time to do an ID for us via the iNaturalist platform. This creates useful data - data that restoration professionals, farmers, and even vintners are using to create native bee-friendly habitats. Because native bees are very important pollinators of many of our crops (often even moreso than the imported honeybee), OregonFlora is providing a benefit to everyone in Oregon.

On a more personal note, I am working to convert much of my yard to native plantings to support not just bees but all Oregon wildlife. I have frequently used the OregonFlora as the definitive source of cultural information for the significant investment I am making in plants, as well as to be sure that I am planting appropriate species.

I respectfully request that you support this bill.