

Submitter: Alexandria Kurowski
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006
4/15/2025

To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Re: HB 3173 (Oregon Flora) - SUPPORT

Dear Committee members:

Hello, my name is Alexandria Kurowski, I'm a graduate student in the Botany and Plant Pathology department at OSU. I'm also the graduate assistant curator for vascular plants at the herbarium located at Oregon State University. When I'm not spending time with dead, pressed plant specimens, I'm a very active member at the local and state level with the Native Plant Society of Oregon. I've been gardening since I could hold a trowel, and have worked at plant nurseries basically my entire adulthood. Plants have encompassed my entire life.

I'm writing on behalf of Oregon Flora, an organization that has positively impacted my life in many ways since I moved to Oregon. From the day I started my work at the herbarium, Oregon Flora has been integral to my daily working life. I use their web platform, oregonflora.org, to perform crucial job duties pertaining to the herbarium. All of our herbarium database work is through the web portal, which is thousands of hours of work between all of the herbarium employees and volunteers, including myself. We use Oregon Flora for identifying plants that people bring into the herbarium, to track important taxonomic information, to view locality of plant species - and there are dozens of other uses that I'm not listing here. When the servers go down due to poor funding, or Oregon Flora employees are threatened with being discharged, this impacts the OSU herbarium severely, which is a very important resource to the natural sciences.

Outside of the herbarium, I use Oregon Flora for many different reasons. I'm the Membership Manager on a state level for the Native Plant Society. I enjoy leading field trips for them, and we get a large range of attendees - students, retired people, long term and short term members. Almost all of my research to lead these field trips involves Oregon Flora, they're by far the best resource for any local plant information I might need to access. Within the organization, we constantly use both the Oregon Flora website and the published floras. NPSO would not be able to do the outreach it does without Oregon Flora. Finally, in my own research as a graduate student, Oregon Flora has helped me and other students in many ways. I use it to look at the range of the species I study, details about its morphology, and use the images from the site in my official presentations.

Oregon Flora doesn't just impact my life in many ways. Government employees, from USDA to the Forest Service, use it regularly. It's an important resource to the professors in my department, my advisor, the staff members and faculty of the natural sciences departments here at Oregon State University. The professional botanists that work in the herbarium use it every day. It's an important teaching resource.

Long-term and sustainable funding is needed to insure Oregon Flora can continue its crucial service in this way. I urge your support of House Bill 3173 to ensure the resources of OregonFlora can continue to be maintained and developed for users statewide.

Thank you for your time, Alexandria Kurowski
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