

Submitter: Dominic Gentilcore
On Behalf Of: Concerned Botanists
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural
Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3173

Oregon HB 3173 appears to be a well-intentioned bill that I would like to support, but it has a critical flaw. The plain text of the legislation would require the public release of all locality information collected on special status plant species including threatened and endangered species. Populations of threatened and endangered plant populations are unfortunately vulnerable to vandalism, illegal collection, and intentional destruction by misguided individuals. Botanists should have the ability to restrict public access to sensitive localities when appropriate. The OregonFlora website currently restricts detailed locality information for certain species, but this legislation would remove that ability because it says that the "OregonFlora Project shall make the data to be provided under subsection (1) of this section available to state and federal agencies, educational institutions, businesses, scientists and the public..." This legislation should be amended to include a provision that allows for the protection of locality information for sensitive species and resubmitted. Passing it in its current form would present a clear and present danger to the state's botanical diversity -- the exact opposite of the intentions of the bill.