

Submitter: Kathy Pendergrass

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3173

Testimony from Kathy Pendergrass

I support passage of both HB 3173 and SB 547

I am now a retired Botanists/Restoration Biologist from Federal Service with the Oregon Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). I now feel that I can advocate for passage of these bills. My former agency is responsible for dispersing much of the Federal Farm Bill funds for conservation work on private lands across the State.

I'm particularly interested to see passage of HB 3173. The Oregon Flora website is an incredible resource for anyone interested in conserving and restoring the native plant biodiversity of the State. In my former Government work, the Oregon Flora website was an essential tool to help me conduct my work. And I used this tool almost daily since the website went live. I could use the book-version of the Oregon Flora or the website descriptive pages and photographs to assist in making plant species identifications. Through these resources, I could determine whether I had native, non-native or invasive plants that needed to be managed or protected on private land sites that I visited.

I could readily find the mapped distribution of species such that I could make credible plant recommendations for all types of habitat restoration work. My work might include seeding State Strategy rare plant communities (i.e. prairie and oak habitats) or formulating appropriate lists of plants for stabilizing soil from erosion or restoration of riparian or wetland habitats or for pollinator enhancements across the entire State. The Oregon Flora website is an indispensable resource that should be supported with State funding to keep the foundational data current and useful to resource professionals as well as for the general public.

Passage of SB 547 would help us maintain and lift public knowledge about the incredible plant diversity that we enjoy here in our beautiful State! Our plant diversity sustains our incredible wildlife and landscape diversity and these beautiful resources should be celebrated.