

HCS HB 2412 -- NONNATIVE INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

SPONSOR: Sassmann

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 1.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2412.

This bill requires that all nurseries and nursery dealers in the state must submit to the Department of Agriculture an affidavit that they will not knowingly or intentionally import, export, buy, sell, transport, distribute, or propagate any plant or seeds of climbing euonymus, japanese honeysuckle, or sericea lespedeza beginning January 1, 2026, or burning bush or callery pear beginning January 1, 2028.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that nonnative invasive plants threaten the state's forestry, cattle industries, and wildlife habitat. This bill would protect Missouri's landscape and the economic value of working land. There are more than 100 nonnative invasive plants in the state, but this bill is limited to the five most prolific.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Sassmann; Sierra Club Missouri Chapter; Bill Ruppert, National Nursery Products - St. Louis; Karen Uhlenhuth; Judith Mckinnon; Matt Arndt, Missouri Invasive Plant Council; Carol Davit, Missouri Invasive Plant Council; and Nicholas Darling.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that research is being done to cultivate varieties of these invasive plants that are bred to be less invasive. The General Assembly does not need to ban the sale of these plants. Consumers need to be educated about nonnative invasive species and alternatives for these plants.

Testifying in person against the bill were Barry Ritter; Barry Ritter, Ritter Horticultural Services; and Lance Randolph Dauw, Tomasovic Greenhouses & Nursery, Inc..

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say currently the Department's Plant Pest Control Program inspects nurseries' inventory for plant pathogens. The inspectors are not trained to

inspect the stock of the nursery dealers for specific plants. This would require 13 new staff to implement the program.

Testifying in person on the bill was Trinity Crouch, Missouri Department of Agriculture.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.