

SUPPORT HB1941 and SB1166

Topic: Retail Invasive Plant Consumer Education

Bill Patron: Holly Seibold (D-Fairfax) | Senator Saddam Salim (D-Fairfax)

Raise awareness of invasive plant harms with point-of-sale consumer education

39 species of invasive plants “pose a threat to Virginia’s forests, native grasslands, wetlands or waterways” and are readily available for sale to Virginia residents without required notice, or recommendation of native or non-invasive alternatives. This results in the accidental purchase, planting, and spread of invasives by well-meaning Virginians, despite many citizens demonstrating they don’t want to unwittingly buy invasive plants.

- Invasive species are expensive. Estimated economic losses due to invasive species in Virginia may be as high as \$1 billion annually. Examples include invasive plants’ degradation of rangelands, clogging of important waterways and causing increased efforts to maintain open power line rights-of-way.
- Invasive plants harm our environment by displacing native plants, threatening wildlife and pollinators that are often unable to utilize non-native species. Approximately 20-45% of native bees are entirely dependent on a single native plant species or genus for their nectar.

REASONS TO SUPPORT:

- The most efficient and effective moment to educate consumers is at the point of sale. This is the only method that reaches 100% of consumers considering planting invasive plants on their property.
- Requiring retailers to provide consumers with clear signage can help direct consumers to alternative options, most often those sold at the same retail location.
- Signage will be developed in consultation with regulatory agencies, retailers, and non-profit advocates.



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