

# SUPPORT HB109

**Topic:** Noxious weeds; amends definition, commercial viability.

**Bill Patron:** Delegate Holly Seibold

## OVERVIEW:

Regulators should be allowed to consider the harms caused to crops, livestock, surface waters, forests, parks, companion animals, and public health when evaluating recommendations for the Virginia Noxious Weeds List, regardless of whether these plants are grown or sold in Virginia.

### This Legislation Would:

- Remove language that prohibits adding a plant to the Noxious Weeds List if it is currently being grown or sold in Virginia, regardless of any harm it is causing.
- Remove the requirement to analyze the commercial viability of plants under evaluation for the Noxious Weeds List.

## REASONS TO SUPPORT:

**The “commercial viability” loophole undermines the millions of dollars spent in Virginia to combat the spread of invasive plants.** Coordinated statewide agency programs, university collaboratives, local government initiatives, nonprofits, residents, and volunteers have banded together to protect Virginia’s farms, parks, waterways, tree canopy, and native wildlife. These efforts are hampered by the continuing sale of invasive plants.

**Invasive plants cause damage to agriculture and forestry.** Invasive plants reduce crop yields, kill livestock, degrade pastures, infest timber stands, and host pests like the spotted lanternflies that damage orchards and vineyards and the blacklegged ticks that carry Lyme disease.

**Invasive plants destroy our tree canopy.** Every day, invasive plants overtake 4,600 acres in the United States, damaging and tearing down our forest canopy trees and leaving a tangled mess that can prevent birds from nesting, pollinators from nectaring, and wildlife from accessing water and food.



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