



Senate Fiscal Agency
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House Bill 4857 (as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Representative Samantha Steckloff
House Committee: Agriculture
Senate Committee: Local Government

CONTENT

The bill would amend Public Act 359 of 1941, which governs the control and destruction of noxious weeds, to specify that milkweed (any species of genus *Asclepias*) could not be considered a noxious weed.

Generally, noxious weeds are plant species that are regarded as nuisances and, according to the State, should be eradicated. The Act requires property owners, and allows local governments, to control and eradicate weeds defined as noxious weeds, such as Canada thistle, poison ivy, or poison sumac.

MCL 247.62

BRIEF RATIONALE

The bill would support biodiversity by ensuring that local governments could not classify a valuable source of food for many pollinators as a noxious weed. While milkweed is toxic to many animals, it also provides food from its nectar, sap, leaves, and flowers for over 450 species of insect.¹ According to testimony, populations of the Monarch butterfly, which depend on milkweed as a host plant for its reproduction, have declined significantly in recent years. Some people believe that not allowing milkweed to be considered a noxious weed by local governments would help to protect and restore vital pollinators and pollinator habitats.

Legislative Analyst: Alex Krabill

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Date Completed: 2-20-24

Fiscal Analysts: Bruce R. Baker
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¹ Taylor, David, United States Forest Service, *Plant of the Week – Common Milkweed*, 2024.