

# Environment Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5013

**Title:** AN ACT ADDING CERTAIN PLANTS TO THE INVASIVE PLANTS LIST.

**Vote Date:** 2/28/2025

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 1/31/2025

**File No.:**

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## SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

## Co-Sponsors:

Rep. Joseph P. Gresko, 121st Dist.  
Rep. Aundre Bumgardner, 41st Dist.  
Rep. Mary M. Mushinsky, 85th Dist.  
Rep. Jennifer Leeper, 132nd Dist.

## REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill adds certain plants to the invasive plants list in Connecticut. Invasive species pose significant danger to multiple native plants and ecosystems, they decrease biodiversity, and harm human health. By increasing regulations to prohibit the sale, use, and distribution of certain invasive plants in the state, the bill addresses these issues and provides a solution to communities dealing with invasive species.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

### **Katie S. Dykes, Commissioner, Department of Energy & Environmental Protection**

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) supports this bill. She testifies that the increased restrictions placed on invasive plants will benefit Connecticut's natural resources by supporting healthy and resilient native plant communities. DEEP does recommend a few changes to bill language: the removal of European buckthorn as this species is already banned, correcting the misspelled name to Frangula Alnus, and consistent capitalization in nomenclature.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

### **Elizabeth Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Water Works Association**

The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) supports this bill. Elizabeth Gara submitted public hearing testimony explaining how invasive plants negatively affect drinking water. Issues include clogging of water pumps, ecological issues affecting taste and odor, interfered recreational fishing, and increased water rates to compensate.

### **Betsy Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Council of Small Towns**

Betsy Gara submitted public hearing testimony explaining the negative impact invasive species have on recreational lakes and public water supply reservoirs. She explains that many small towns struggle addressing invasive plants. This bill allowing the Invasive Plants Council to add certain plants to the invasive plants list gives towns a proactive solution to these issues.

### **Julianna Larue, Organizer, Sierra Club Connecticut**

Julianna Larue supports this bill strongly requesting the addition of Euonymus Alatus (Burning Bush) and Running Bamboo as banned invasives. Burning Bush has already been banned in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Delaware, and Pennsylvania thanks to its environmental threat of reducing biodiversity and its highly flammable growth increasing risk of wildfires. Running Bamboo often grows in sidewalks, roads, and structural foundations, heavily damaging them and increasing maintenance costs.

The following organizations support this bill through public hearing testimony. They explain the dangers invasive species pose to natural habitats, often decreasing biodiversity, express concern over the harmful creation of monocultures, and describe the negative impact many invasive species have on human health.

### **Alicea Charamut, Executive Director, Rivers Alliance of Connecticut**

### **Samuel Gold, Executive Director, Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments**

### **Amy Blaymore Paterson Executive Director, Connecticut Land Conservation Council.**

**103 citizens expressed support**

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**1 citizen expressed opposition**

**Reported by: Phoebe Mann**

**Date: March 13, 2025**