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legislative chair
Michigan Garden Clubs

Rep
Honorable Howell and members of the Natural Resources and Recreation
Committee,

Founded in 1931 the Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc., is comprised of 136 member garden clubs totaling 4,628 members. Our mission is "to provide the love of gardening, floral and landscape design, and environmental responsibility." Our mission of education is not just for members, but for the citizens of Michigan as well. To that end, we support the Black Swallowtail Bill (HB5642) for the following reasons:

- The value of pollinators cannot be overstated. Michigan is a food basket with an incredible variety of crops. According to the National Pollinator Garden Network, "Pollinators are responsible for 1 of every 3 bites of food." Michigan's pollinators, birds, bees, bats, and, of special interest today, butterflies directly impact Michigan's agricultural crops and even its tourism. Of great importance, is the fact that a preponderance of studies show that pollinators are on a worrisome decline.
- We support a butterfly to represent pollinators as they are nonthreatening, loved by all, and represent hope. MGC hopes for an environmentally stable environment that will sustain healthy Michiganders.
- The Black Swallowtail is a full-time Michigan resident which means that it overwinters in Michigan as a pupa. Consequently, they are always easily located for educational purposes.
- The native habitat for the Black Swallowtail covers the entire state of Michigan.
- The Black Swallowtail is 3-4 inches in diameter making it easy to be seen and appreciated by all residents.
- The Black Swallowtail enjoys sipping nectar from many plants native to Michigan and plants found in our gardens. A few examples include sunflowers, zinnia, purple coneflower, petunia, golden alexander, butterfly bush, red clover, common milkweed.
- The Black Swallowtail prefers a variety of host plants found through our state. A few examples of host plants include clover, dill, fennel, milkweed,

parsley, Queen Anne's Lace and rue as favorites of this butterfly. The variety and abundance of host plants ensure that future generation of the Black Swallowtail will remain alive and well in our great state.

In conclusion, we think that the Black Swallowtail makes an ideal candidate as the State Butterfly as it is nonthreatening, loved by all, represents hope for an environmentally healthy future, is ubiquitous throughout Michigan, and is easily found and identified. Nectar and host plants are commonly found throughout the state. Consequently, the Black Swallowtail would provide an excellent and important learning opportunity for Michigan's citizens of all ages.

Michigan Garden Clubs appreciate that the Natural Resources and Recreation Committee is considering HB5642. We believe that the Black Swallowtail would proudly represent Michigan.