

December 5, 2018

Michigan House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee

Thank you for your time today on this important issue. I appreciate all the work Senator Kowall, the Department of Natural Resources, and the legislature as a whole has put into this.

My name is Christopher Benes, I am the owner of Pet Suppliers in Highland, a small independent pet store that specializes in tropical fish. I am here to voice my support for Senate Bill 1072. I share the goal of keeping invasive species out of Michigan's waterways and feel that having a prohibited species list is a more effective way to accomplish this.

From an enforcement standpoint, it just makes more sense to have a list of perhaps hundreds of organisms that are not permitted, rather than a list of potentially tens of thousands that are. Keep in mind that the vast majority of species traded will not live in Michigan because they are either tropical, saltwater or both. I support the proactive reporting requirements put in place by this bill that pertain to species sold that potentially could survive here.

From a business standpoint new species enter the trade all the time, and this is a significant part of my business. Waiting for these to be added to a permitted species list would be quite a burden on my business that would put me at a competitive disadvantage.

I thank you again for your time, and will gladly answer any questions that you have.