

September 20, 2022

Honorable David R. Millard, Majority Chair

128 Main Capitol Building

P.O. Box 202109

Harrisburg, PA 17120-2109

Re: Public Hearing on the role and impact of public horticulture in tourism in the State of PA

Dear Chairs Millard and Daley,

On behalf of the more than 450 member organizations of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance (GPCA), I am pleased to support Pennsylvania's horticulture sector, a vital contributor to the Commonwealth's tourism industry. GPCA member organizations such as Longwood Gardens and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society showcase an incredible commitment to cultivating plant life for public enjoyment, conservation, and research which translates into millions of dollars in the state economy. In addition to these organizations, Pennsylvania boasts an impressive array of public gardens, parks, and arboreturns that highlight the state's natural flora and fauna, along with a variety of exotic botany.

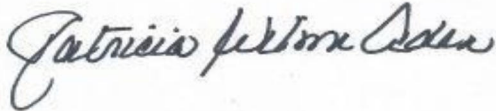
Pennsylvania's horticulture sector has an annual visitor base of 4.2 million people, with almost half of those visitors journeying to the greater Philadelphia region alone. Outside of gardens and public parks, this sector has a diverse portfolio of institutions that contribute to its vibrance and variety; these organizations include cemeteries, college and university campuses, historical homes, urban greening organizations, and arboreta. Each of these institutions offers travelers a unique experience, spurring cross pollination of tourism dollars, jobs, and cultural exchange.

We cannot speak about the significance of this industry's work without highlighting its critical role in conservation. As the state begins to experience the effects of climate change, the horticultural industry's expertise in preservation and botany stewardship

is critical to preserving natural landscapes and resources for future Pennsylvanians. Many of these organizations are already leading efforts to protect the state's plant life from further damage, and offer a unique opportunity to facilitate collaboration between sectors with conservation-focused public programs and policies.

Visitors travel to horticultural institutions to be inspired, educated, and find reprieve in the beauty of plant life and landscapes. As President & CEO of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance and on behalf of our membership, I am proud to support the horticulture industry and look forward to future advocacy as the sector continues to grow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Wilson Aden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Patricia Wilson Aden

President & CEO