

Letter of Support
HB 5174, An Act Establishing A Children's State Flower
Session Year 2015

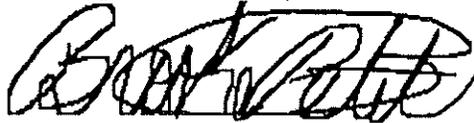
To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of HB 5174, an act to create a CT Children's State Flower. Establishing the 4 O'Clock as the state flower of Connecticut would be a positive act that would provide children with ownership and validation. Having a flower as a symbolic representation for children can only lead to positive outcomes. The 4 O'Clock is special because it is simple in nature but diverse in style. What better flora to represent the children of Connecticut? In a time when differences isolate and separate communities, the 4 O'Clock is an example of the strength that diversity brings. The most curious aspect of the 4 O'Clock is its color. A singular flower can contain different colors, and similarly different colors can present themselves on the same plant. Amid these different colors and differences, beauty is present and the flower thrives. I support the 4 O'Clock and HB 5174 because it provides a tangible object to a complex and challenging social reality.

Our differences might be severe, but this diversity makes us stronger. Michaela Petit understood this innately. Michaela was my cousin, just 3 years younger than me, yet she often looked older because of her height! We stuck together growing up, the only picky eaters in the Petit clan. Michaela's life was stolen from her, but her 11 years of spunk to this minute speak strongly to me. She had friends of different races, religions, ethnicities, ages, abilities, social classes, and so on. Did they like HGTV, Rachael Ray, soccer, or a cute furry friend? Michaela was sold!! It was the seemingly insignificant simple features of life that allowed her to connect to those who were different. Michaela understood that differences in individuals lead to a stronger whole, and I believe the 4 O'Clock is a beautiful symbol for this lesson. The more varied the petals and flowers on the plant, the greater the beauty.

It is with upmost sincerity that I give my highest endorsement in support of HB 5174, to establish the 4 O'Clock as the CT children's state flower— a simple act to establish a permanent symbol of validation, diversity, and community for the children of Connecticut. Michaela would be thrilled.

With hope and sincerity,



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