

JOHN SPIROS

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Assembly Bill 321/Senate Bill 248

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Testimony from Rep. Spiros

Hello, and thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture for allowing me to have the opportunity to share my testimony with you today regarding Assembly Bill 321/ Senate Bill 248, which would designate ginseng as the state herb of Wisconsin.

Assembly Bill 321/Senate Bill 248 will shine a spotlight on a treasure in our state that is known nationally for its exceptional quality. Ginseng is an herb, primarily found in China with varieties native to North America. It is used for medicinal purposes, especially in eastern Asia. However, ginseng is an important industry in the state of Wisconsin as well. Marathon County accounts for 95% of the ginseng production in the United States, making Wisconsin the #1 producer of ginseng in our country.

Next month, Wausau will host the International Wisconsin Ginseng Festival to highlight the amazing production, methods, research and output of ginseng in Marathon County. This festival will take place September 15-17, 2017 and I encourage anyone who is interested in seeing firsthand some of the ginseng farms in our state to come out and take part in the many activities and tours.

I am pleased to share this bill has the support of the Ginseng Board of Wisconsin and I believe we will be hearing testimony from board members today on the importance of this bill.

Because of the vital role that ginseng plays in our economy, both on the state level and in the world market, it is time to pass this bill to make this important and long overdue designation.

Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to share testimony in support of this bill, and I welcome any questions.