

March 26, 2024

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Chairman, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: MBIA Letter of HB 1511 Forest Conservation Act - Modifications

Dear Chairman Feldman,

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding **HB 1511 Forest Conservation Act - Modifications**.

This legislation makes some corrections to the Forest Conservation Act amendments that passed the Legislature in 2023. There have been some unexpected challenges in implementation and we support the changes that are proposed.

MBIA supports the version of the legislation that passed the House of Delegates. We support the amendment that was added in the House that allows the creation of new forest mitigation banks should be allowed to become effective on July 1, 2024, as that was the date we originally agreed upon. Several jurisdictions, including Montgomery and Prince George's County, have either revised their local conservation ordinances or are in the process to meet the state's increased mitigation requirements already, or are revising them based on the original implementation date. Not allowing new banks based on preservation to be created for an additional two years will have a detrimental effect on our industry, especially in jurisdictions where mitigation requirements have increased substantially.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully urges the Committee to give this measure **a favorable report**. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee