

March 7, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chairman, House Environment & Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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

Dear Chairman Korman,

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.

While MBIA supports the measures in this bill, we would like to propose an amendment. The provision 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 with amendments** 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 House Environment & Transportation Committee