



March 21, 2025

HB452 Outdoor Lighting - Guidance and Use of State Funds
Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
Hearing March 25, 2025
FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and honorable members of the Committee,

The Green Towson Alliance writes in support of HB452. This bill will require the Maryland Green Building Council to develop guidance for certain state-purchased permanent outdoor lighting fixtures, in order to reduce light pollution and color temperature. This guidance will be in accordance with recommendations from the American Medical Association, which recommends lighting that is fully shielded and downward directed, with a color temperature no greater than 3,000 Kelvins.¹

The American Medical Association has issued numerous reports documenting the harmful effects of artificial night lighting, especially bright, light-emitting diode (LED) lighting. Excessive night light deprives us of the awe-inspiring experience of looking up and seeing the majestic, star-filled night sky. It also causes the suppression of melatonin production, which is linked to depressed immune function, diabetes, cancer, and other health issues.

At a time when insect, bird, and other wildlife populations are plummeting globally, light pollution causes additional pressure and mortality. Bright lights attract and disorient the 60% of animals that are nocturnal, such as fireflies, moths, bats, and sea turtle hatchlings, all of whom have evolved with natural nocturnal light. Millions of birds die per year when artificial night light attracts them to buildings during nocturnal migration, increasing fatal collisions. Neotropical migrant species like our beloved Baltimore Oriole are at risk.

We ask for a favorable report on HB452 as an important step toward limiting the harmful impacts of light pollution to people and wildlife in our state.

Respectfully,
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The Green Towson Alliance unites Towson area environmentalists to create a greener, healthier and more beautiful community through collaboration and activism.

¹ *AMA J Ethics*. 2024;26(10):E804-810. Doi: 10.1001/amajethics.2024.804.