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I am encouraging you to support SB92 Maryland Sustainable Buildings Act of 2023. I am asking you to support this bill because these same building standards have already been passed in many other states and cities. Passing this bill benefits the community, environment, and wildlife.

In my role as the Director of Lights Out Baltimore, I have seen the negative impact that poorly designed buildings have on the local community as well. Birds found dead or injured from building collisions in downtown Baltimore inspired members of the community to form Lights Out Baltimore (LOB), an all-volunteer based organization of the Baltimore Bird Club that rescues birds from glass collisions during spring and fall migration. Local businesses that too became disheartened by finding dead or injured birds have started monitoring their own buildings and installing retrofits that provide a safe environment for migratory birds. As LOB works with the community there is a need for state support on creating the surrounding environment next to bird habitats safe for birds.

Your support for this bill will do exactly that-incorporate truly sustainable design that considers light efficient practices and bird-safe elements to reduce glass collisions. Since 2008, LOB has found over 6500 dead birds in the downtown area, rescued 2200, and reported 107 species, 66 which are listed on the Department of Natural Resources Maryland Species of Greatest Conservation Need. One rescued bird was a Yellow Rail, a bird last, documented in 1893 in Baltimore city. An average of 450 birds are found dead in downtown Baltimore monitoring 20 buildings only 4 months a year. Can you imagine how high the average number is across the state of Maryland year around? With an increase of glass features in development, abundance of exposed lighting fixtures, the annual number of bird mortality will see a significant and alarming increase.

Voting in favor of this bill is an example of Maryland's leadership in building the community, conserving energy, saving energy costs, and conserving native wildlife. I urge you to support this important bill to ensure a vital future for these migratory birds and the Maryland community to enjoy them.

Thank you,
Lindsay Jacks