



MARYLAND LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

NAACP Maryland STATE CONFERENCE



Audubon

MID-ATLANTIC



Maryland Conservation Council Protecting Maryland's Natural Heritage Since 1969



BLUE WATER BALTIMORE



Baltimore Jewish Council An agency of The Associated



NATIONAL AQUARIUM®



**Bill Title:** SB92—Department of General Services—Energy-Conserving Standards (Maryland Sustainable Buildings Act of 2023)

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Clarence Lam

**Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment

**Position:** Support

**Date:** February 2, 2023

## Community in SUPPORT of Maryland Sustainable Buildings Act of 2023

We, the undersigned organizations, support enacting the Maryland Sustainable Buildings Act of 2023 to ensure Maryland continues to be a national leader in energy efficiency and biodiversity conservation—helping achieve the goals set out in the transformational 2022 Climate Solutions Now Act.

This bill would require all newly built, acquired, or renovated buildings receiving 51% Maryland State funding to follow standards for bird-friendly windows and shielded nighttime lighting, which will both conserve energy and save birds. This is of urgent need right now as we face climate change impacts and continue to lose one billion birds each year to collisions with window glass in the United States. These birds are part of our healthy breeding populations and their losses are unsustainable, as witnessed by the 29% reduction in bird numbers since 1970. Every year that bird populations decline, we lose valuable services in pollination, seed dispersal, and pest insect consumption. Birds are also critical to Maryland’s tourism industry. Wildlife watching in Maryland generates over \$450 million in economic activity annually in the state.

Many jurisdictions have already passed similar legislation around the world and in the United States, including New York City, Illinois, and recently The DC Council just passed a bird-friendly bill and the Mayor has signed it. In 2020, Howard County became the first county in Maryland to pass bird-friendly building legislation.

This is a common-sense bill, where scientists and builders have come together to find proven solutions, which will save the state money over time. The methods to protect birds are codified as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Innovation Credit by the U.S. Green Building Council. Currently, builders and architects may use this credit to meet LEED certifications, but the credit is optional and we need this bill to make it mandatory.



This bill is a win-win both saving birds and saving energy. Passage is urgently needed to address the increased use of large glass windows in buildings that threatens to undo energy conservation efforts, cost the state money, and contribute to climate change.

We urge a **FAVORABLE** report for this bill.

Signed,

Safe Skies Maryland

Maryland Ornithological Society

Maryland Native Plant Society

NAACP Maryland

Audubon Mid Atlantic

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Baltimore Jewish Council

Maryland League of Conservation Voters

Blue Water Baltimore

Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

National Aquarium

Indivisible HoCo Maryland

Climate Justice Wing

Maryland Legislative Coalition

Maryland Conservation Council

The Nature Conservancy

Audubon Society of Central Maryland

American Bird Conservancy

DC Voters for Animals

SAFE Saving Animals from Extinction—North American Songbirds

City Wildlife

Forever Maryland

Clean Water Action

Annapolis Green

Capital Nature

Friends of Quincy Run