



Maryland Office
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February 28, 2025

To: Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Maryland Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

From: Jim Brown, Policy Director, Audubon Mid-Atlantic

Subject: Favorable Testimony for Maryland SB 635, Wildlife - Protections and Highway Crossings

Audubon Mid-Atlantic submits this testimony in support of Senate Bill 635. Audubon Mid-Atlantic is the regional presence of National Audubon Society, representing over 35,000 Marylanders who advocate for the protection of birds, bird habitat, and policies aiming to protect both birds and human communities in the face of increasing environmental challenges, habitat loss, pollution, and climate change. We work with partner organizations, government agencies, and local communities to protect birds and the places they need to survive now, and into the future.

Science tells us birds are in decline due to habitat loss and fragmentation. 1/3 of all Maryland bird species experienced significant population declines in the past 50 years. Roadways and other forms of human development contribute to this fragmentation. We support SB 635 because it increases collaboration between state agencies, establishes a wildlife connectivity fund, promotes public awareness, and prioritizes sustainable growth, all with the goal of protecting threatened wildlife, improving public safety, and preventing habitat fragmentation.

By putting protections in place that identify and prioritize efforts to prevent fragmentation, Maryland will be setting a standard of land-use planning that will bring added protections to birds and all of the co-benefits that birds bring us. It will hold Maryland up as a national leader in conservation planning.

Audubon Mid-Atlantic respectfully urges a favorable review of SB 635.

Thank You,

Jim Brown
Policy Director
Audubon Mid-Atlantic