

February 17, 2025

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

**RE: MBIA Letter of Support with Amendments HB 894 Endangered and Threatened Species –
Incidental Taking – Bats**

Dear Chairman Korman,

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the discussion surrounding **HB 894 Endangered and Threatened Species – Incidental Taking – Bats**. MBIA supports this measure with amendments.

Our industry supports the intent of this legislation and recognize the need for a clear and effective process for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to authorize incidental takes of the Indiana bat, Northern long-eared bat, and Tricolor bat. However, we believe the bill would be improved by aligning the state’s process with existing federal permitting requirements to avoid redundancy and streamline compliance.

Rather than creating a duplicative state process for incidental take authorizations, we encourage an amendment that allows DNR to accept federal incidental take permits issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as sufficient for state authorization. The federal process already requires rigorous conservation plans, mitigation strategies, and funding assurances. By recognizing federal permits, Maryland can ensure species protection while reducing unnecessary administrative burdens on permit applicants and conservation projects.

A unified front of authorization will create a more streamlined approach that would provide the necessary regulatory clarity while maintaining the conservation goals outlined in the bill. We believe that by amending the bill to integrate federal authorizations, the state can facilitate responsible environmental stewardship without creating additional layers of review that may unnecessarily delay essential projects while providing the same level of authorization.

We appreciate the efforts to address this important issue and look forward to working with the committee to refine the bill in a way that balances conservation with efficiency.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully urges the Committee to give this measure a favorable report with amendments. 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