



## Maryland Chapter

7338 Baltimore Avenue, Suite 102  
College Park, MD 20740-3211

**Committee: Health and Government Operations**

**Testimony on: HB 192 – “Energy-Conserving Standards (Maryland Sustainable Buildings Act of 2020)”**

**Position: Support**

**Hearing Date: February 11, 2020**

The Maryland Sierra Club urges support for this legislation, which will require the Department of General Services to promulgate standards for state buildings to better protect our bird populations and promote energy efficiency.

As good stewards to our natural world, it is our responsibility to help preserve biodiversity when we can. There is now a looming crisis in our bird populations. A recent study found that the overall numbers of birds in the United States and Canada have declined by almost a third since 1970. It is estimated that up to one billion birds die by collision with glass in the United States each year. Both research and practical experience have demonstrated that a substantial percentage of these deaths are preventable. The buildings we construct can and should use bird-friendly building designs.

Importantly, when this is done, buildings also are more energy efficient. While well-placed windows are important to a building design, and allow for natural lighting, the overuse of windows is detrimental to energy efficiency. Windows are the weakest link in the building envelope, and the greater the surface area of windows, the more energy that is needed to keep the building cool in the summer and warm in the winter. In addition, large expanses of windows may create uncomfortable indoor environments for building occupants. People may close window coverings to try to mitigate glare and temperature extremes. This bill will encourage the construction of more sustainable buildings that use less energy and provide a better indoor environment.

This bill also would save taxpayers money in state-owned and managed buildings by reducing heating and cooling costs. The energy saved will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Maryland.

In sum, incorporating bird-friendly design will save energy and protect birds. Maryland should take this first step to lead the way by adopting this legislation. Please support this bill.

Carolyn Parsa  
Chair, Howard County Group  
Carolyn.Parsa@MDSierra.org

Josh Tulkin  
Chapter Director  
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org