

I have the pleasure to serve as Vice President for the Maryland Conservation Partnership, Director of Safe Skies Maryland, and Co Director of the Bird City Maryland initiative. My time is spent utilizing the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) that identifies the list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) that will require meaningful actions if we are to retain them. This guiding document also identifies human-caused avian mortality events and specifically notes the need to address collisions with glass.

More than 50 statewide partners working at various levels are trying to create opportunities that will positively ensure Marylanders retain native birdlife. What is clear to me is that people at all levels of society from our school children to our elected representatives love birds and want reasonable solutions to be able to live in harmony with them no matter where in our state they reside. People want to learn about birds, invite birds into their environments, and celebrate birds in ways that build communities. They also have a fundamental expectation that we will take meaningful steps in leadership wherever we can to conserve birds.

We know that the second leading cause of avian mortality in North America is the loss of birds from nearly every species of migratory and resident population due to collisions with reflective and transparent glass. All our collective efforts to restore native habitat will not ensure the stewardship of these native species without a fundamental understanding that glass is a present in nearly every restoration area. In fact, *increased mortality* occurs in areas where we have deliberately offered habitat enhancements to support them because these areas also have glass that prevents safe flight. We continue to build at such a rapid pace that birds are pushed into the most urban of environments. Even those that offer very little in the way of suitable habitat still pose a great danger because they severely limit the effective navigation out of those areas.

We have reached the moment in history where glass and its deleterious effect on not only birds, but bats, bug life, and a host of native scavengers and predators must be addressed properly if we are to see any positive results from the many efforts at restoration going on around our state. This coupled with the fact that glass is the least energy efficient material to build with makes a known advancement in sustainable design appropriate for serious consideration. Technological advancements that address solar heat gain, glare, increased heating and cooling costs, and almost totally prevent regular and ongoing avian mortality events are readily available. The many choices outlined in LEED Credit 55 ensure a more energy-efficient, less costly, and more sustainable building in what will likely be its life cycle of 50 years or more, even when the building is constructed of 100% glass façade. To have beauty without sustainability is not in the interest of either citizens who rely on the significant economic gains associated with jobs, retail, and tourism or the farmers and land managers who gain significant ecosystem level services like pollination and pest removal. It is also an

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unnecessary choice because we can have both: all glass buildings for aesthetic purposes and features that ensure they are sustainable.

In Howard County citizens celebrated the passage of CB11 that will ensure these standards for sustainability will be met. It makes a great deal of sense both fiscally and in the protection of our natural resources that are so fundamental to Marylanders that the State continues to update its sustainability measures as well.

I urge you on behalf of the many citizens with whom I regularly engage to support this effort with your favorable vote. Thank you for your time and consideration.