



AIA
Maryland

Promoting Maryland Architecture Since 1965

18 January, 2021

Delegate Shane Pendergrass
Chair of the Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support for HB 0236
Department of General Services – Energy Conserving Standards
(Maryland Sustainable Buildings Act of 2021).

Dear Chairman Pendergrass:

I am writing to voice AIA Maryland's support of House Bill 0236. AIA Maryland represents nearly 2,000 architects in the state of Maryland and advocates for the profession and the quality of the built environment. As we work to be good stewards of the built environment, we are equally cognizant of the natural environment that we interact with and we aim to minimize our impact on the natural world. This bill's primary purpose is clearly to reduce the number of bird strikes on buildings and we believe this bill takes practical measures that can help reduce the likelihood of these collisions from happening. This issue is particularly important in Maryland where we are on the Atlantic flyway, a heavily traveled path for migratory birds.

A couple member firms from our state chapter have tested the tool this bill implements, LEED Sustainable Sites pilot credit 55 on a couple of new 2-story sample projects. The process required for both projects only required a little extra design time. The process enables sufficient flexibility to be able to meet the design criteria without any undue hardship and we do not expect it would have any significant project cost impact. We also acknowledge that there may be some energy reduction through window criteria, screening and opacity of materials that may reduce heat gain on buildings in addition to limiting night-time illumination of interior glass-enclosed spaces and exterior lighting. Based on the testing of projects that were completed, we believe such accommodations can be made on new designs, or when existing buildings are being substantially renovated. In either case, the building skins and systems can be designed to respond to the proposed criteria.

Maryland is not acting alone in adopting guidelines like these. Given our geophysical presence along the coast and the Chesapeake Bay, it is particularly important to provide an accommodating migratory path for birds. Other states and jurisdictions have already enacted regulations similar to this bill, those include the state of Minnesota, New York City, San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago, Toronto and others. Building codes continue to move toward developing buildings with a more efficient building envelope and the bird friendly criteria can be incorporated into the design parameters. Studies have shown that by implementing bird friendly design parameters, bird collision deaths can be reduced by up to 90 percent.

The American Institute of Architects

AIA Maryland
86 Maryland Avenue
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

T (410) 263 0916
F (410) 263 5603

www.aiaMaryland.org

We recommend that the regulations be incorporated in the Maryland Green Building Council's program requirements documents so they are in a location where design professionals will reference criteria they need to meet. Starting with these measures early in the design process enables the design team to incorporate elements in the building design from the beginning where they may have limited to no effect on building cost.

AIA Maryland cares deeply about the quality of Maryland's natural and built environment. Sensible measures that diminish the impact of our built environment on the natural world are valuable to all of us. We therefore respectfully ask your committee to vote in favor of HB 0236 that provides thoughtful, responsible paths to bird-friendly design and may provide some added benefits of diminishing energy use.

Sincerely,



Chris Parts, AIA
Director, Past President, AIA Maryland

cc: Health and Government Operations Committee:

Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk – Vice Chair
Harry Bhandari
Bonnie Cullison
Ken Kerr
Matthew Morgan
Sheree Sample-Hughes

Heather Bagnall
Alfred C. Carr, Jr.
Terri L. Hill
Nicholaus R. Kipke
Teresa E. Reilly
Kathy Szeliga

Erek L. Barron
Nick Charles
Steve Johnson
Susan W. Krebs
Samuel I. Rosenberg
Karen Lewis Young

Lisa Belcastro
Brian Chisholm
Ariana B. Kelly
Robbyn Lewis
Sid Saab

AIA Maryland Board of Directors

The American Institute of Architects

AIA Maryland
86 Maryland Avenue
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

T (410) 263 0916
F (410) 263 5603

www.aiaMaryland.org