



# Audubon | MID-ATLANTIC

**Maryland Office**  
2901 E. Baltimore St  
Baltimore, MD 21214

March 18, 2024

**To:** Chair Korman, Vice-chair Boyce and members of the Maryland House Committee on Environment and Transportation

**From:** Audubon Mid-Atlantic

**Subject: Favorable Testimony for Maryland Senate Bill 178 Agriculture – Pollinator Habitat Plan – Requirements for State Highway Administration**

Audubon Mid-Atlantic submits this testimony in support of Senate Bill 178. Audubon Mid-Atlantic is the regional office 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. SB 178 will help the state of Maryland take the important steps of protecting pollinating insects and birds.

Audubon supports this bill because it shows how human and wildlife communities can be managed to the benefit of both, and that humans have the capacity to retrofit our infrastructure systems in ways that provide beneficial co-uses – In this case the dual location of our transportation corridors with important ecosystem enhancements such as pollinator habitats along our roadways in every corner of the state.

The Avian Science tells us that birds are in decline. A Leading cause of these declines is habitat loss which limits access to food sources and breeding grounds. 1/3 of Maryland's bird species experienced significant population declines in the past 50 years. This bill is good for birds in Maryland for two primary reasons. It provides habitat for pollinators which are an important part of birds' diets, and it aims to curb the spread of invasive species which are dramatically altering important bird habitat throughout the state.

SB 178 enables Maryland to address these ecological challenges by maintaining our transportation infrastructure, WHILE integrating beneficial uses of the corridors to make Maryland a leader habitat conservation, ecosystem preservation, and the protection of birds now and in the future.

Audubon Mid-Atlantic respectfully urges a favorable review of this legislation.

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