

Sayers, Margery

From: Carolyn Parsa <carolyn.parsa@mdsierra.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 12:16 PM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Subject: Support for CB11-2020
Attachments: CB11 HoCo Sierra Club Testimony.pdf

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Honorable County Council,

I hope this email finds you all well, and thank you for all you are doing during these difficult times.

Please find the attached letter of support for CB11-2020 from the Howard County Sierra Club.

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Carolyn Parsa
Sierra Club Howard County Chair

March 25, 2020



Sierra Club Howard County

RE: Support for CB11-2020 Bird Friendly Building Design

The Howard County Sierra Club supports CB11-2020 that would require new buildings which must be U.S. Green Building Council LEED certified to include credit 55 as one of their LEED credits.

Howard County has taken great strides in the path towards sustainability. Passing CB11 would be another step toward a sustainable Howard County that would benefit us twofold.

The implementation of LEED 55 would work towards preserving our bird diversity, not only in Howard County, but also along the entire Atlantic Flyway where birds migrate north and south. Maryland is a stopover for healthy migratory birds and it is our responsibility to make our urban habitat as safe for them as we can. Birds killed by collisions are often the healthiest birds that are an essential part of the breeding population. These losses are unsustainable, and Howard County should do its part to prevent them. Bird Safe Design measures are well researched by the American Bird Conservancy and very effective in reducing bird collisions. Additionally this technology is becoming more widespread in use, and can be cost neutral when incorporated at the design phase. This is the best time to implement these measures as they will be in place for the life of the building.

As a second benefit, these design changes covered under LEED 55 also have the added benefit of making the building more energy efficient. With the current design trend of using glass over the majority of the outer surface of buildings, we are learning that these buildings come with considerable heating and cooling costs. These buildings are often too hot, too cold, or too bright. The considerable glare is incompatible with our current use of computers, and many times, the building occupants draw the shades or blinds to improve their work environment. Under LEED 55, the choice is still available to have large windows, but to use treated glass which has built in protections for birds that also reduces glare and heat gain.

In summary, this passing this bill would benefit our bird population while helping reduce overall energy costs in building operations. On a local and global level protecting our birds is extremely important, as loss of biodiversity has been identified as one of the greatest current threats to humanity. We urge you to pass CB11-2020.

Carolyn Parsa
Chair, Howard County Sierra Club

Sayers, Margery

From: Benji Gantz <bjg12311231@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 22, 2020 7:03 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard County Bill CB11 Support
Attachments: CB11 Testimony.docx

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello members of the Howard County Council,

My name is Benjamin Gantz, and I am in favor of passing proposed Howard County Bill CB11. This bill would require new Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) buildings in the county to implement specified window design features that would prevent bird window collisions.

I am a Carroll County resident and am representing the Phoenix Wildlife Center, based in Baltimore County. I have been a volunteer with the center for 3 years now, and have witnessed firsthand how much impact window collisions have on birds.

I have written a testimony in favor of passing CB11 and have attached it to this email.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my testimony.

Best,

Benjamin Gantz

CB11 Testimony

My name is Benjamin Gantz, a volunteer wildlife caretaker at the Phoenix Wildlife Center in Baltimore County, Maryland. I am representing the Phoenix Wildlife Center and speaking in favor of passing bill CB11- Bird Friendly Building Design for New Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certified buildings. This bill would require new LEED buildings in Howard County to implement specified bird friendly design features to prevent window collisions. Window collisions are a leading factor in the decline of North American bird populations. Birds have numerous benefits to both the environment and economy. A few of their important services include pest control, seed dispersal, and providing opportunities for outdoor recreation. Birds are also an important part of tourism, including in Howard County. The diversity of unique species draws in birders and photographers.

I have been very fortunate in being able to volunteer with the Phoenix Wildlife Center, a 501 (c)3 non-profit dedicated to the rehabilitation and release of Maryland's wildlife. We receive a wide variety of wildlife species throughout the year from Howard County and other locations that need help from different situations. One issue in particular, window collisions, is responsible for a large majority of the birds brought in. This problem is at its greatest during spring and fall migration, when birds are making their way between wintering grounds and summer breeding sites. Many of the birds we receive during these times are found in Baltimore City. Volunteers with an organization called Lights out Baltimore (LOB) walk around the city regularly, picking up any birds that fall victim to window collisions. Unfortunately, many are killed. Those that aren't are brought in to the wildlife center where they are treated appropriately. Although many of the birds brought to us are from LOB, we also receive many calls from Howard County residents who have found window-struck birds. We tell each person the best course of action to take and then refer them to two other rehabilitation centers in the county. Howard County's major cities are expanding, and as the amount of infrastructure increases a higher number of birds would be killed. The situation would resemble what is occurring in Baltimore currently, with window-struck birds lining the sidewalks in need of help. This problem would be prevalent during migration, but would also be seen throughout the year in all of Howard County's expanding major cities.

During spring and fall, downed birds are put into brown paper bags for transport and to help them recover. It is not uncommon to see these bags filling incubators in the clinic. Although these birds are alive, not all of them can be saved. Their injuries from the collision are too severe. Others can be released, but are injured and require treatment. One of the most common injuries is brain trauma, and the birds must be medicated properly to heal them. Many of the birds only suffer from shock and after being allowed to stabilize and rest in the bag for several hours, they can be released. Some of the migratory bird species that we receive include American Redstarts, Common Yellowthroats, Ovenbirds, and American Woodcocks. Some

species suffer from higher mortality from window collisions than others. Woodcocks are an example. This species is also one of the more common brought to us, and at times many have come in within just a few days. I remember at one point, in less than a weeks' time, around 10 individuals were brought to us. Woodcocks once nested in Howard County's Middle Patuxent Environmental Area, and were a favorite bird of Columbia's founder, James Rouse. But today they face serious population declines from habitat loss in much of their range. These often fatal collisions further erode the wild population. And it is important to note that the collision victims we receive are otherwise healthy birds that could have reproduced if they had not crashed into windows.

Window collisions occur throughout the state and are more likely to occur in urban areas with large buildings. However, they can also occur in less populated suburban areas. Passing bill CB11 would save the lives of many birds by preventing them from colliding with windows of new county LEED buildings. This would be especially important for migratory birds making their way through Howard County, and it would also make a difference for our resident bird species. Not only would the window design standards in CB11 benefit birds, they would also increase the cooling efficiency of the buildings during summer. Since window collisions are a major contributor to bird declines, passing this bill would make a big difference. Howard County has already retrofitted certain buildings to make them bird friendly, examples include the Howard County Conservancy building and Howard Community College. There are also new county buildings planned that will eliminate the risk of window collisions. Passing CB11 would further protect our birds. I ask that you support bill CB11- Bird Friendly Building Design for New Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified buildings.

Thank you,

Benjamin Gantz