

June 21, 2021

**Re: OPPOSITION TO CB57 – Enhanced Penalties for Forest Conservation Violations**

Dear Counsel Chair Walsh and Members of the Howard County Council:

The Howard County Chapter of the Maryland Building Industry Association (MBIA) writes in opposition to Council Bill 57, which would create enhanced penalties for violations of the county Forest Conservation Act. The Forest Conservation Act of Howard County was repealed and reenacted in December 2019 with an effective date of February 5, 2020. A revised Forest Conservation Manual was approved by Resolution in February 2021. Since these Acts and Manuals were only recently passed, it is an unreasonable burden on builders and developers to now consider additional changes to the Forest Conservation Act. Both the County and the industry has only begun to implement these new rules and there isn't a track record that indicates that changes are necessary at this time.

This legislation would require that the Department of Inspections automatically revoke processing of Forest Conservation Plans and suspend the processing of new plans for violators of the Forest Conservation Act for all properties on which a violation occurred. This bill represents a significant change to the forest conservation act that is still new and not yet fully implemented as stated above. Additionally, the act has no timeline for when a revised forest conservation plan must be issued by the department, allowing projects to be potentially suspended in perpetuity.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Council vote against Council Bill 57-2021. Thank you for your attention to this vital issue and your continued support of the local home building industry. If you have any questions about these comments and would like to discuss MBIA's position further, please do not hesitate to contact me at [iambruso@marylandbuilders.org](mailto:iambruso@marylandbuilders.org) or (202) 815-4445.

Best regards,

Isaac Ambruso, Director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs

Cc: Counsel Chair Elizabeth Walsh  
Vice-Chair Opel Jones  
Councilmember Deb Jung  
County Executive Calvin Ball  
Councilman David Yungmann

## Sayers, Margery

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**From:** Tori Diersen <torridtorid@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 28, 2021 8:45 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Support of CB 56 and CB 57

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

I am writing in support of CB 56 and 57 because I believe they will protect our natural environment which is CRITICAL to our futures. Saving mature and historic trees not only beautifies our neighborhoods, but it also helps with water management by slowing run-off (therefore preventing flooding). Additionally, preventing soil erosion and protecting natural habitats for insects, birds, and many other members of the wildlife community that we share our space with is of extreme importance to me and many of those that I know. I feel disappointed by the number of times I hear about a developer ignoring regulations and damaging our environment because the consequences are not enough of a deterrent when weighed against the monetary profit they will experience. It is emotionally exhausting and disappointing to know that the interests of me and my loved ones are not being protected. I absolutely favor the natural environment over concrete and steel monstrosities and nature brings me and nearly everyone I know a sense of peace, health, and relaxation. Please consider CB 56 and 57 positively and demonstrate that you care about the mental and emotional health of the residents in your county as well as the environment and our futures.

Thank you,  
Tori Diersen  
Savage, MD