



The Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act

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Submitted by Leona
Fleming
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“In 2007, birders took me to the McCormick Place in Chicago during migratory season. I saw the new mirrored and glass buildings in the city, and I also saw dozens and dozens of beautiful songbirds lying on the ground. It was very hard to watch.

Following that, I introduced and passed legislation by the Cook County Board of Commissioners as a model for other organizations across the country. We learned what building designs work best to save birds. Now, we can incorporate these features on a larger basis.”

Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL)



“About two years ago, my five-year-old came up on the floor with me, and when we finished voting he said, “Daddy there’s a dead bird out on the ledge.” Just off the floor of the Representatives, there are these windows, and an Ovenbird had flown into the window of the Capitol....

...If you are constructing a new federal building, or already making major renovations to an old one, then this bill requires that you put in some bird-safe windows so you don’t have birds like that Ovenbird flying into windows and getting killed.

Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-VA)



Legislative goals for HR 2280

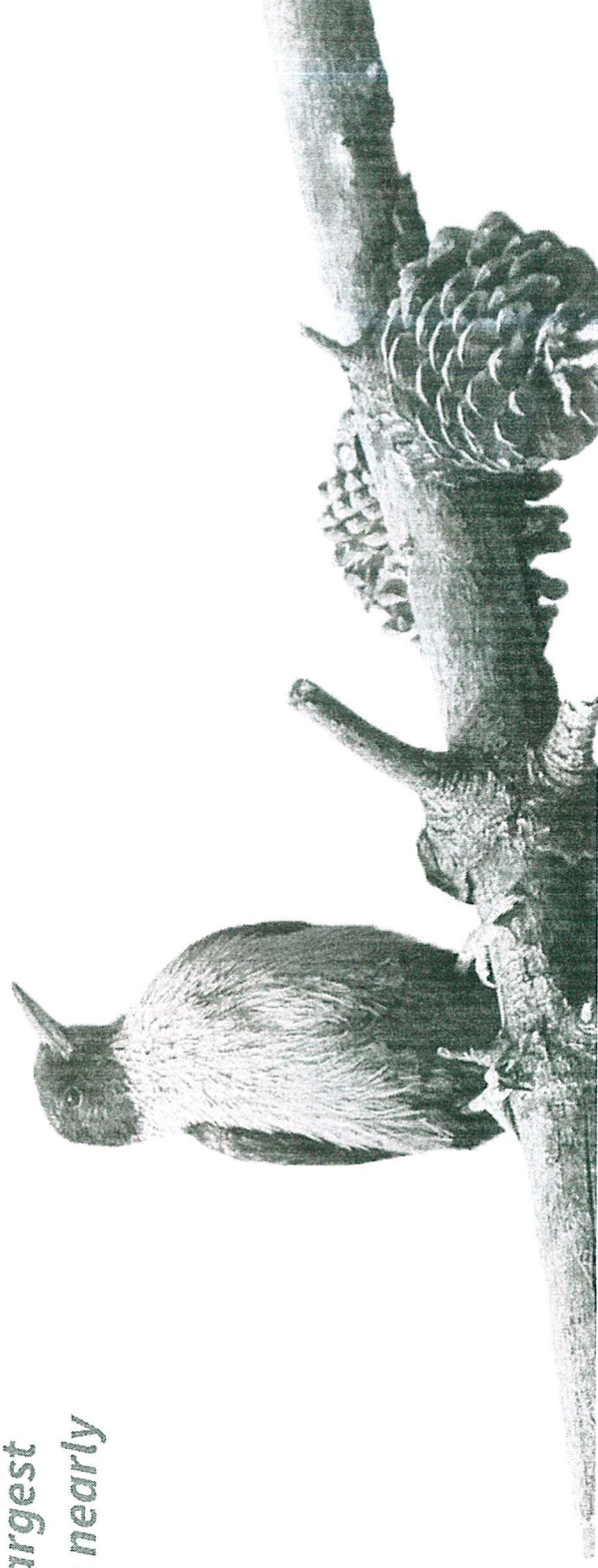
Save birds from needless deaths and injuries

Incorporate bird-friendly building materials and design into federal buildings

Based on success in Cook County, Illinois

GSA, the “nation’s largest landlord”, manages nearly 10,000 buildings

Cost neutral



The bill's provisions

Applies to:

- **New construction**
- **Major renovations**
- **Acquired buildings**

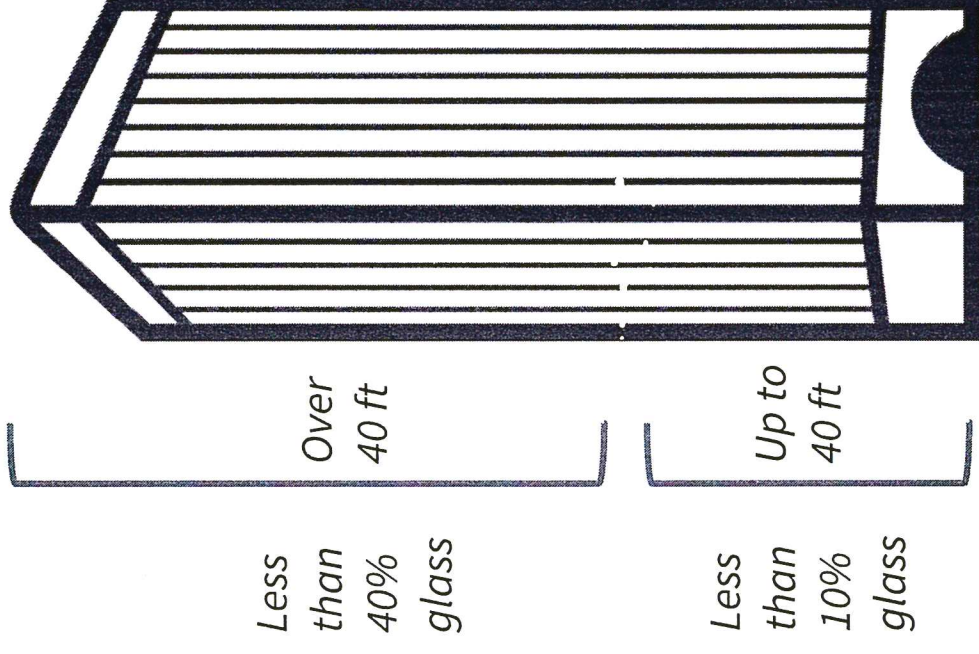
Up to 40 feet:

- **Less than 10% of exposed façade can be glass**
- **If glass is used, there must be safety features:**
 - **Shades, netting, screens**
 - **UV-reflective glass**
 - **Patterns on glass (2x4 rule)**
 - **Opaque, etched, or frosted glass**

Over 40 feet:

- **Less than 40% of exposed façade can be glass**
 - **And utilize standards above**

Exemptions: Historic buildings (U.S. Capitol, White House, etc)



Other provisions

Monitor buildings

Shield, minimize outdoor lights

Encourage automatic controls

Timers, photo sensors, infrared and motion detectors

Prevent transparent corners and passageways

Glass modifications in courtyards with water and plants



Legislative Status

Other pathways

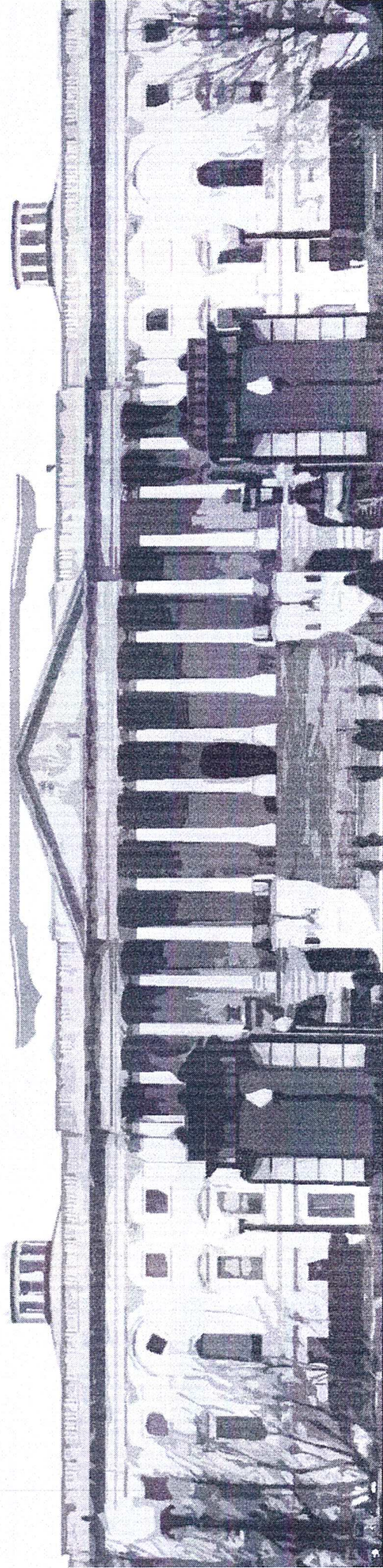
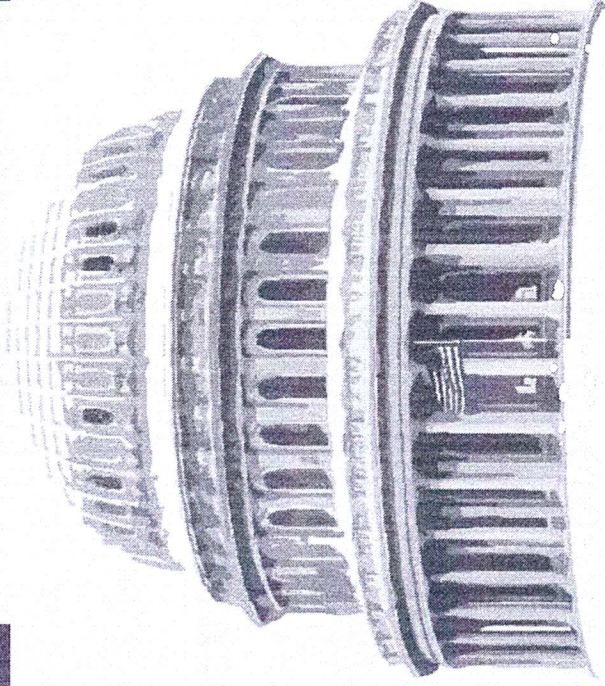
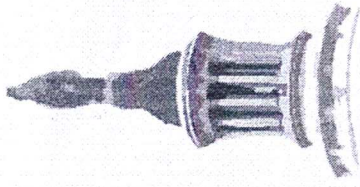
**Transportation and
Infrastructure Committee**

**Appropriations bill
language**

22 cosponsors

Senate version

**Next step: committee
hearing**





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Senator Cory Booker Tackles a Huge Cause of Bird Deaths

Building collisions kill hundreds of millions of birds each year. Senator Booker introduced a bill to reduce bird deaths caused by federal buildings.



By National Audubon Society
October 06, 2017



By National Audubon Society

October 06, 2017

Birds in This Story



0

Days

15

Hours

17

Minutes

42

Seconds

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American Redstart
Setophaga ruticilla

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WASHINGTON

— “Making buildings safer for birds is the kind of common-sense and necessary legislation Congress should quickly send to the President,”

said Sarah Greenberger, Audubon’s VP of Conservation Policy, in response to introduction of Senate Bill 1920.

“Birds need all the help we can offer as they navigate through an increasingly hazardous environment. We know bird-safe building design is an effective and inexpensive solution to a major cause of bird mortality. Senator Booker’s leadership on this issue brings America one step closer to reducing needless bird deaths. Audubon strongly supports this bill and its bipartisan counterpart in the House.”

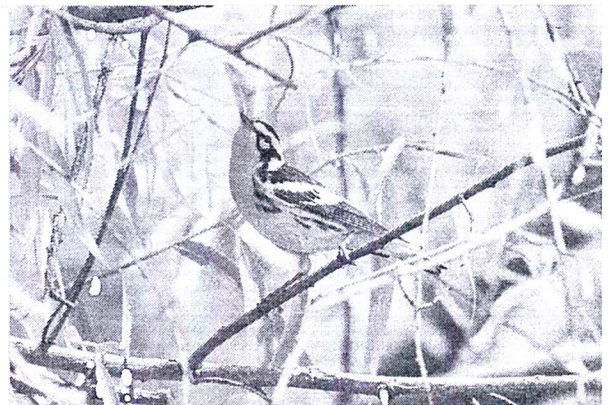
In May, Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL) and Congressman Morgan Griffith (R-VA) re-introduced the bipartisan U.S. House bill, H.R. 2542.

Collisions with human-made structures is a leading cause of avian mortality in the United States. An estimated 300 million to 1 billion birds die each year from building collisions. Incorporating bird-friendly design has been shown to reduce collision deaths by up to 90

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Blackburnian Warbler. Photo: Bradley Bennett/Audubon Photography Awards

percent. The Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act would establish guidelines for all future construction and alteration projects on federal buildings and hopes to inspire non-federal buildings following suit.

A key guideline would reduce the presence of plain glass to a maximum of 10 percent of the first 40 feet of a building's façade, and a maximum of 40 percent above the 40-foot threshold. Using patterned glass instead of plain glass allows birds to see glass surfaces and avoid collision. Smarter lighting practices that reduce light pollution and save energy are also included in the legislation's guidelines. Many birds migrate at night and can be disoriented by lighting, and best practices include using automatic lights that turn off while not in use and shielded lights, which protect birds flying overhead.

The National Audubon Society works with state governments to guide the implementation of bird-safe building code. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo announced his state's participation in the Lights Out Initiative, an effort spearheaded by Audubon New York to turn off unessential outdoor lighting during peak bird migration seasons. In the Twin Cities, Project BirdSafe is a joint effort between Audubon Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to reduce the number of birds killed or injured by building collisions.

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education and on-the-ground conservation. Audubon's state programs, nature centers, chapters and partners have an unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire and unite diverse communities in conservation action. Since 1905, Audubon's vision has been a world in which people and wildlife thrive. Audubon is a nonprofit conservation organization. Learn more at www.audubon.org and @audubonsociety.

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Animal Services was able to rescue just three birds after a massive number of spring migrants hit a glass-sided tower in Galveston.

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