



Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act of 2015

Hundreds of millions of birds are killed each year after flying into glass windows. Congressmen Mike Quigley (D-IL) and Morgan Griffith (R-VA) have proposed H.R. 2280, a no-cost, common-sense solution that would address these needless deaths by establishing guidelines for all future construction and alteration projects on federal buildings.

The Bird Safe Buildings Act of 2015 eliminates the most hazardous building features by addressing certain aspects of building and lighting design. Under this rule, only 10% of facade building material up to 40 feet on buildings can be composed of plain glass. The rest must include bird-friendly design features including patterned glass, film, and netting or screening to prevent bird collisions without obscuring the occupant's vision. Transparent passageways and corners are also precluded below heights of 40 feet. Above the 40 foot threshold, 40% of the exposed material may be unaltered glass.

H.R. 2280 also promotes light pollution reduction which helps birds while saving energy and reducing carbon emissions. Many birds migrate at night and can be drawn off course by lighting. This bill advocates for the use of efficient technologies, like automatic and shielded lights, which reduce light pollution and help migrating birds navigate night skies.

Oversight would also be greatly improved as a result of this legislation as administrators would be mandated to monitor bird mortality at federal buildings, thus ensuring the true cost to birds is accounted for.

This legislation works hand in hand with state and local efforts around the country to decrease man-made threats to birds, especially in migration routes. These policies include "lights-out" programs in cities during spring and fall migration and local ordinances encouraging or mandating bird-friendly design. These regulations also serve as guidelines to promote bird-safe construction policies in the private sector.

At a time when hazards to birds are increasing, now is the right time to do everything we can to reduce man-made threats to birds. H.R. 2280 is an important step in that direction and **Audubon fully supports this legislation.**

Why Birds Matter

Birds are an important part of our natural landscape and should be conserved wherever possible. By reducing the threat of collision with federal buildings, millions of birds could escape a needless death.

- Nearly one-third of the 800 bird species in the United States are endangered, threatened, or in significant decline.
- In the United States alone, hundreds of millions of birds die annually from striking buildings, bridges, and other man-made structures, with glass being one of the primary causes of death.
- Birds have a significant impact on the United States economy, as evidenced by United States Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that the 47 million birdwatchers in the United States contribute \$40 billion annually to the nation's economy.

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Photos top, left to right: Blue Grosbeak, FiRust; Painted Bunting, Layton Parham.; Scarlet Tanager, Linda Steele; Audubon Photo Awards 2012

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