



**Pennsylvania Office**  
Discovery Center  
3401 Reservoir Dr  
Philadelphia, PA 19121

June 21, 2024

**To:** Chair Vitali and members of the House Environmental Resource and Energy Committee  
**From:** Audubon Mid-Atlantic

**Subject: PRESS (Pennsylvania Reliable Energy Sustainability Standards Act)**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on HB 2277, the Pennsylvania Reliable Energy Sustainability Standards Act. Audubon Mid-Atlantic is the regional office of National Audubon Society, representing over 60,000 Pennsylvanians in every community across the state. Rooted in science, Audubon Mid-Atlantic works to protect birds and the places they need to survive in the face of increasing environmental challenges, including habitat loss, pollution and climate change. We strive to create healthy, climate resilient ecosystems where birds thrive, and all people have access to the benefits of a resilient environment. Audubon also recognizes that the environmental threats birds face are often the same threats felt by communities across Pennsylvania.

Audubon Mid-Atlantic supports the Pennsylvania Reliable Energy Sustainability Standards Act. HB 2277 will protect birds and human communities from the impacts of climate change across Pennsylvania. Adopting renewable energy standards is a critical catalyst to efforts that will lead to reducing carbon emissions and air pollution, while lowering ambient temperatures that are negatively impacting bird migratory and breeding patterns. Audubon supports renewable energy—including utility scale wind and solar, offshore wind, community solar and geothermal—that is properly sited in ways that avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative impacts on birds and other wildlife.

Pennsylvania consistently ranks among the lowest states—often between 45<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup>—in renewable energy production and growth, which necessitates swift and strong action. Requiring Pennsylvania to get at least 35% of its energy from renewable sources by 2035—as HB 2277 aims to do—would provide the foundation for tangible steps in the right direction. This legislation is not only good for Pennsylvania’s environment, it is also good for Pennsylvania’s resident and migratory birds and the places that they need to survive. This program will benefit ratepayers as well, as revenue from the program will go toward consumer electricity bill rebates as well as energy efficient investments small businesses and large-scale producers alike.

Science has shown that birds are in decline due to habitat loss and climate change. One-third of Pennsylvania’s forest and grassland bird species experienced significant population declines in the past 50 years. Iconic Pennsylvania birds such as the Wood Thrush, American Kestrel, Brown Thrasher, Cerulean Warbler, and Eastern Meadowlark are in decline across the state. Birds are losing critical nesting, feeding, and migratory territory each year due to climate change and pollution related habitat

loss. HB 2277 will slow and reverse this trend by increasing Tier I and II renewable energy project requirements, thereby encouraging a transition to non-greenhouse gas emitting energy production in Pennsylvania.

The science tells us:

- Greenhouse gas emissions-induced climate change is the most significant threat to birds and people in Pennsylvania
- Transitioning to renewable energy sources will mitigate and slow the impacts of climate change on our vulnerable human and bird communities

HB 2277 will protect birds, and it protects all of Pennsylvania's communities from the impacts of climate change by making renewable, non-carbon-based energy available to more consumers throughout the state. This will strengthen Pennsylvania's energy economy, create a more climate-resilient environment, and deliver better public health outcomes. This bill is good for birds. It is good for people. And it is good for the future of Pennsylvania's energy landscape.

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

Thank You,

Jim Brown

Audubon Mid-Atlantic  
Policy Director

For further questions please contact Audubon Mid-Atlantic Policy Director, Jim Brown at [jim.brown@audubon.org](mailto:jim.brown@audubon.org) or 410.558.2437 x101