

Testimony in Support of HB 0900

Chair and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of **HB 0900**.

As **data centers** continue to drive increasing electricity demand, utilities often justify **new high-voltage transmission lines** as necessary infrastructure. However, these projects **seize private land through eminent domain, lower property values, destroy farmland and forests, and raise electric rates for Maryland residents and small businesses**. **HB 0900** ensures that those responsible for this energy demand—**data centers**—bear the financial burden rather than offloading costs onto ratepayers and communities.

This bill requires that:

- **Data centers commit to long-term contracts** of at least 24 years, preventing speculative development.
- **Developers cover the full cost of infrastructure upgrades** and pay exit fees if they terminate service early.
- **Existing data centers meet stricter requirements** if they expand beyond 2,500 kW.

By enforcing **financial responsibility**, **HB 0900 discourages unnecessary transmission expansion** and promotes alternative energy solutions, including:

- **Localized energy generation** such as on-site renewables and battery storage.
- **Distributed Energy Resources (DERs)** and private microgrids, reducing reliance on large-scale transmission projects.

This bill represents a **critical step toward modernizing Maryland's energy grid** while protecting **landowners, ratepayers, and the environment**. If passed, it could serve as a model for other states facing similar challenges. I urge you to support **HB 0900** and ensure that Maryland's energy future is built on fairness, accountability, and smart planning. Maryland can lead the way, will we?

Thank you.

Brenda Myers